



Dear Sir/Madam

Please see attached Story Homes representations to the Warrington Preferred Options Consultation and Call for Sites Consultation which closes at 5pm today.

To respond directly to the Preferred Options document we attach:

- Written representation 'Warrington Pref Opt Rep'
- Culcheth, land at Warrington Road - Story Homes vision document (please note a hard copy will be submitted to the council on Monday)

To respond directly to the call for sites consultation we attach:

- Culcheth, land at Warrington Road – SHLAA site submission (copy version)
  - Culcheth, land east and west of Holcroft Lane (retained land) – SHLAA site submission
- (For original pdf versions of SHLAA proforma please contact me if required).

Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email submission

Kind Regards

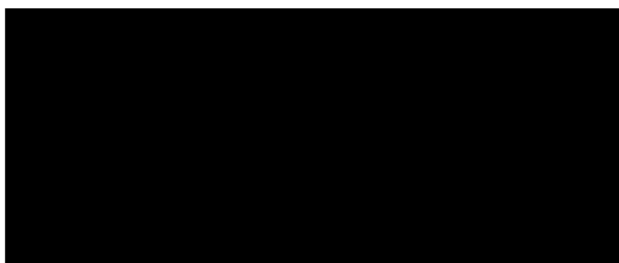


**Story Homes Ltd**

Kensington House, Ackhurst Business Park, Foxhole Road, Chorley, Lancashire, PR7 1NY

Tel: 

[www.storyhomes.co.uk](http://www.storyhomes.co.uk)





# **Warrington Preferred Development Option**

## Land at Warrington Road, Culcheth

Representation by Story Homes

September 2017



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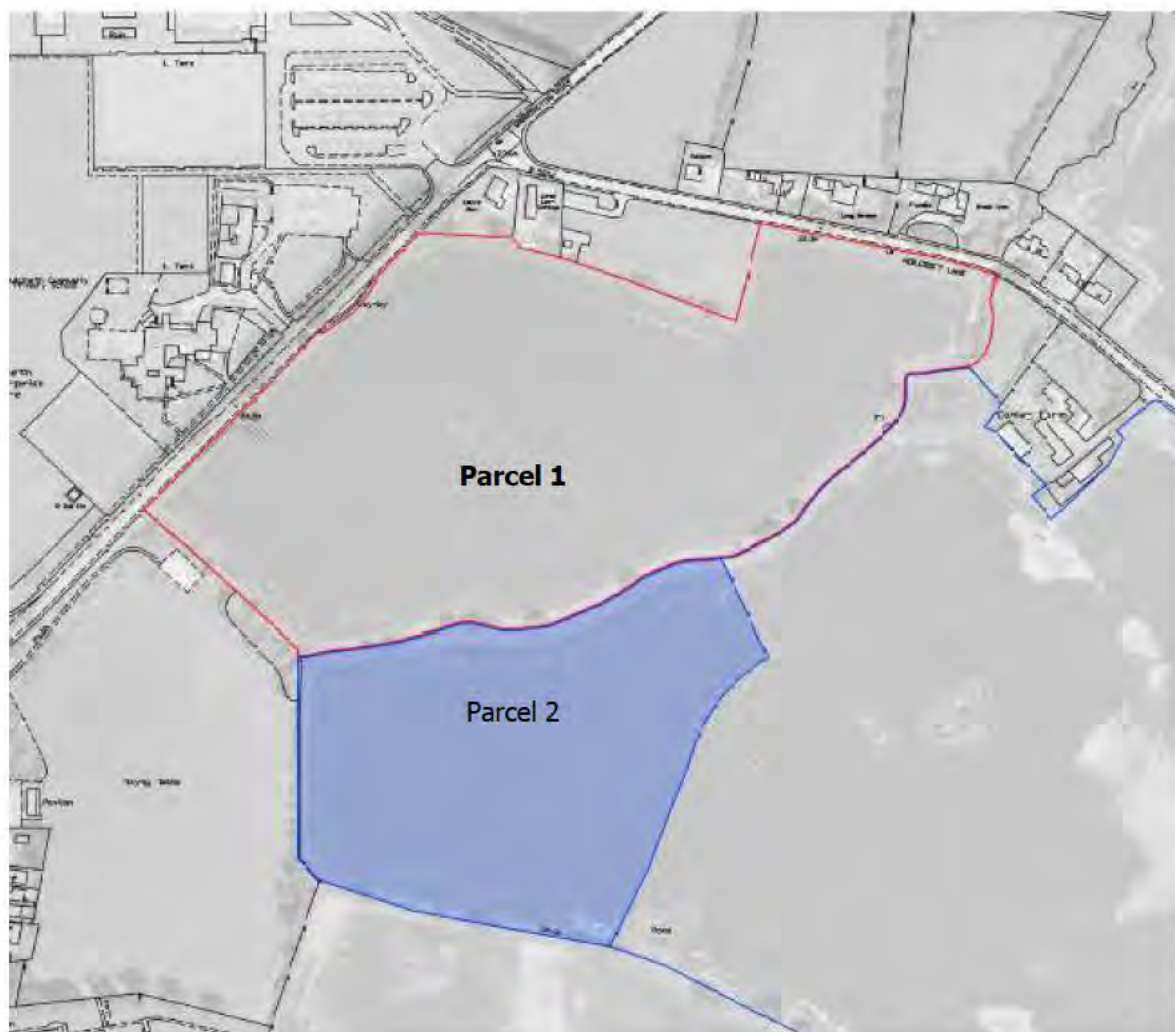
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- Appendix 1:** Site location plan
- Appendix 2:** Bespoke letter from HSE (16<sup>th</sup> June 2017)



## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document presents Story Homes' representation response to the Warrington Preferred Option consultation as part of the Local Plan Review by Warrington Borough Council (WBC).
- 1.1.2 Story Homes have an interest in land located at **Warrington Road in Culcheth**, which is the subject of this representation.
- 1.1.3 Please refer to Figure 1 to identify the site location, we refer to this site as 'Parcel 1' which measures approximately 7.08 ha (17.5 acres) We consider the land at Warrington Road in Culcheth to be a sustainable site which can make a significant positive contribution to helping meet Warrington's housing need. The representation is being made therefore to support the growth of Culcheth as a larger outlying settlement of Warrington with the delivery of new housing to meet its needs, and with the retention of Green Belt land where appropriate. We consider the land at Warrington Road to be the most suitable and sustainable site in Culcheth to meet its housing needs. We therefore propose the release of this site from the Green Belt and its allocation for housing.
- 1.1.4 Story Homes would also like to submit additional land referred to as 'Parcel 2' and within the same ownership to the Council as available, suitable and deliverable.
- 1.1.5 It is considered that the combined parcel's extending to a total of 11.53ha (28.49 acres) provide the opportunity for the entirety of Culcheth's housing needs to be met in one location maximising community benefits that can be delivered as part of a wider scheme.
- 1.1.6 Figure 1 therefore shows the principal site (referred to as 'Parcel 1) as the land edged red. The additional land, 'Parcel 2' is shown edged blue and measures approximately 4.45 ha (11 acres).
- 1.1.7 It is worth noting that this representation deals principally with the site edged red in Figure 1 referred to as 'Parcel 1'. We do however briefly discuss the merits of the potential inclusion of 'Parcel 2' for the Council to consider but we ask that the Council consider the sites independently for the purpose of this response.



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

- 1.1.8 WYG have been appointed by Story Homes and have prepared this representation on their behalf. A wider team of specialists have been appointed and are providing supporting workstreams that are summarised within this representation. This includes Woodcroft Design (masterplanning), Croft (transport) and other technical specialists.
- 1.1.9 This representation follows the previous stage Local Plan response prepared by Story Homes for the site. We endeavour to build upon this work, summarising additional technical work and presenting new arguments for a realignment of the Green Belt in this location and subsequent allocation of the site.
- 1.1.10 Story Homes have also sought to lead a positive engagement process with local stakeholders in respect of the site. This has involved making contact with ward councillors in order to help them understand the nature of the proposals and to put forward a range of benefits for the



community that Story Homes can consider including within their proposals. Story Homes have also successfully engaged with Culcheth Community Primary School to understand how the proposed scheme can seek to deliver wider community benefits. Further progress will be summarised in representations at subsequent consultation stages.

- 1.1.11 This document is structured to look first at the Preferred Development Option consultation document, followed by a look at several key supporting evidence base documents, before then assessing the merits of the site.
- 1.1.12 We have also prepared a 'Vision Document' for the site. This is a visual, attractively presented A3 document that summarises key points from the representation in a shortened, non-technical and easy-to-read format, alongside relevant supporting images. The vision document is intended to support this representation (and is attached to the submission) and is chiefly intended for a wider community and stakeholder audience.



### **1.2 About Story Homes**

- 1.2.1 The Story Difference – comprising a commitment to design quality, place-making and customer experience – will be instrumental in delivering an exemplary new development which Warrington Council can be proud of.
- 1.2.2 Story Homes is a privately owned housebuilder. Founded by Fred Story in 1987, it has a long and successful reputation of building quality and high specification homes across the North of England and South of Scotland. The family owned business has grown in size and status over the years but remains grounded, built on its original ethos of ‘doing the right thing’ and creating a brand synonymous with quality.
- 1.2.3 For nearly 30 years Story Homes has been the name most often associated with aspirational homes for sale throughout Cumbria, the North East and Lancashire. A passion for quality and excellence has seen Story Homes become a multi-award winning UK property developer; with modern and attractive homes instantly inspiring buyers.
- 1.2.4 Story Homes have been awarded the top ‘5 star’ rating in the house building industry’s annual customer satisfaction survey for the 4th year running since becoming eligible. Story Homes’ success is underpinned by a determination to understand the needs of communities where we build and a goal to deliver design quality and high quality building specifications that enhance locations.
- 1.2.5 Story Homes’ presence in the North West is growing significantly. They have been awarded 3 UK Property awards including ‘Best Residential Development’ in 2016 and 2015 for their sites, Brookwood Park in Kirkham and High Wood in Lancaster. In addition, they were also awarded ‘North West Housebuilder of the Year’ at the North West Insider Property awards in January 2017.
- 1.2.6 Story Homes strives to go that extra mile by:





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- Employing local people and supporting local trade
- Using local materials where possible
- Enrolling new apprentices into their 'Story Apprentice Scheme'. Story Homes will directly employ the apprentice on completion of the scheme or will support the candidate in setting-up their own business that would subsequently be a sub-contractor to Story Homes.
- Enrolling new Graduates to the 'Story Graduate Scheme' across their departments seeking new talent and fresh ideas.
- Supporting local communities and being a good neighbour in the communities they impact upon
- Building beautiful homes that continue to look great in years to come and enhance communities
- Providing 'affordable' homes for local people
- Collecting detailed feedback from customers and identifying and taking action on areas for improvement



## **2.0 General Commentary on Preferred Development Option**

2.1.1 This section presents Story Homes' response to the Local Plan Preferred Development Option (Regulation 18 Consultation) published in July 2017. This principally concerns strategic approaches to meeting housing needs across the Borough.

## **2.2 DCLG Consultation Proposals on Objectively Assessed Need (OAN)**

2.2.1 Story Homes also wish to provide some interim commentary on the proposed Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) consultation paper 'Planning for the right homes in the right places: consultation proposals' released Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> September.

2.2.2 The Government have announced proposals to simplify the calculation of OAN, reducing the time and cost for LPA's in arriving at their housing need figure and to encourage transparency and certainty for members of the public. We do not wish to go into detail here about the implications of the methodology in assessing housing need through the proposed formula; rather we only wish to support Warrington Council in their preparation of a local plan that seeks to balance housing delivery with economic growth.

2.2.3 We support the Council's economic aspirations and transition from new town to 'new city' and we would encourage the Council to maintain the envisaged housing target as set out in the Preferred Development Option going forward to submission stage of the Local Plan. Within the consultation document, DCLG encourage deviation from the proposed approach where, as a result of strategic infrastructure or increased employment, an LPA wishes to increase the housing requirement to realise its ambitions. DCLG confirm that they propose to amend planning guidance so that a Planning Inspector is advised to work on the assumption that this approach is sound (Para 46).

2.2.4 Story Homes will continue to support Warrington's growth aspirations and encourage the Council to maintain their proposed housing requirement through to the submission of the local plan. This will realise social and economic benefits throughout the Borough in addition to reducing any potential delay to the preparation and adoption of Warrington's local plan.

## **2.3 Meeting Housing Need – General Comments**

2.3.1 Story Homes therefore support the identified OAN requirement to provide 1,113 new homes per year in the period 2017-37. Once the 5% buffer and provision for a backlog of 847 units is applied this requirement becomes 1,211 new homes per annum (in accordance with Table

1, p16, of the Preferred Development Option). We note that the Council conclude that Green Belt release will be required to meet this target and we agree with and support this conclusion.

- 2.3.2 Achieving the number of homes required within the Plan period relies on a significant increase in the scale of housing delivery. The rate of 1,211 homes per year is approximately double the rate of annual provision over the last seven years (see below). However, it must be noted that the figure is lower than the rate of annual provision in the pre-recession years of 2006/07 and 2007/08. It is therefore clear that Warrington can accommodate and then sustain these rates of housebuilding which will coincide with the Council's economic growth aspirations.

**Table 2.1 - Previous rates of housebuilding completions (extracted from 2015 SHLAA Final Report Table 3.8 and Annual Monitoring Report 2016)**

Year	Completions
2006/07	1,362
2007/08	1,565
2008/09	633
2009/10	388
2010/11	527
2011/12	600
2012/13	647
2013/14	693
2014/15	687
2015/16	595

- 2.3.3 In order to meet this very ambitious increase in the scale of delivery we believe that it will be very important to prioritise the release of the most deliverable sites, especially for the first five years of the Plan period. These are likely to be greenfield sites, relatively free of constraints, and located in attractive market areas. Green Belt sites put forward in the Call for Sites exercise, such as Warrington Road in Culcheth, would make a good candidate for a priority site.

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- 2.3.4 The proposed strategy (as set out in Table 1 in the Preferred Development Option) relies on Green Belt sites being capable of delivering 440 units per year (8,791 in the 20 year plan period) and sites within the urban area delivering 771 units per year (15,429 in the plan period); result in an overall housebuilding rate of 1,211 units per year. We believe that this balance, with only 36% of the sites being located in the Green Belt, will not enable the required doubling housebuilding delivery rate to be met. We also believe that the capacity of urban land has been overestimated (see 2.2.8 below).
- 2.3.5 In order to meet the required annual delivery rate we therefore believe that a greater number of Green Belt sites need to be identified for delivery in the first 5 years of the plan period in particular and that the ratio of Green Belt sites needs to substantially increase from 36% of the allocated land.
- 2.3.6 Allowing an appropriate buffer will also be important in helping to ensure that this ambitious delivery target can be met. At present the strategy allows only for the 5% buffer that is required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There is a very real risk that sites not being promoted by a developer may not come forward at the rate envisaged, especially if a high reliance on the urban area is maintained. A buffer that offers flexibility then becomes crucial, especially for the first five-year period. We believe that the Council's strategy should be flexible enough to allow Safeguarded Land to come forward within the Plan period if allocated sites are not proving deliverable within the required timescale. We provide further commentary on this under Safeguarded Land below.

### **Response to Evidence Base**

- 2.3.7 We note that the **Strategic Housing Market Assessment** (SHMA) has been updated following the Issues and Options Stage consultation. We welcome the fact that the economic activity rate forecast now more closely reflects best practice and as a result generates a more realistic picture of Objectively Assessed Need (OAN).
- 2.3.8 With regard to the 2015 **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** (SHLAA), we support the use of variable developable area ratios (75%, 90% and 100%) to estimate site capacity. This provides a useful 'rule of thumb' to estimate collective capacity across many sites. However, when more information is known about individual sites this should be used to provide a more accurate estimate of capacity that respond to site conditions. Similarly, different densities of development will be appropriate for different sites, as will differing build rates. This can then inform a more accurate estimate of total capacity for the subsequent Local Plan stage. We have provided such information with regard to our site in Section 7 of

this document.

- 2.3.9 **Urban Land Capacity Study** – we note that the Preferred Option has been informed by the Urban Land Capacity Study in assessing the amount of housing that can potentially be accommodated in the inner urban area of Warrington. Whilst we support the principle of maximising the capacity of housing on brownfield development in the urban area, we have concerns with this Study, which we feel significantly overestimates the amount of development that could be accommodated within the urban area. As a result, we consider that more land will need to be released from the Green Belt than is currently proposed. These concerns are explained in Section 6 of this document.
- 2.3.10 **Green Belt Assessment** – we note that the land at Warrington Road in Culcheth is assessed as making a 'weak' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt, therefore making it one of the most suitable areas of land for release.
- 2.3.11 Further commentary on evidence base documents are provided in Section 6.

## 2.4 Safeguarded Land

- 2.4.1 We welcome the approach to safeguard further land in the Green Belt for potential housing needs for ten years beyond the Plan period. The principle of safeguarding land reflects best practice in plan-making and guidance within the NPPF. However, we have serious concerns with the methodology for both calculating the amount of land to be safeguarded for housing and for deciding where this is to be geographically located. If the Council is going to identify safeguarded land to meet future needs then we feel it is important that this exercise is done accurately to properly plan for future needs. We have three following points to make in this regard.
- 2.4.2 Firstly, why is the lower annual provision target of 955 units per annum applied to the safeguarded land, and not the plan period target of 1,113 homes per annum? Is the Council assuming that a lower rate of economic growth will apply after the plan period? There are, of course, difficulties in making projections so far into the future but we feel the sensible approach would be to apply the same figure beyond the Plan period as during it. We consider that to reduce this figure would have a significantly adverse impact upon economic growth especially given the Council's ambitions to progress Warrington as a 'New City' from its current New Town status.

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- 2.4.3 Secondly, whilst we accept that the housing target already has a 5% buffer applied, we do not agree that this buffer will no longer be required after the Plan period. The same issues are likely to apply, with not all sites being capable of being brought forward for delivery and so applying a 5% would be sensible, and in line with the NPPF. Therefore, we do not agree that a nine-year requirement should be applied for ten years beyond the Plan period. If the buffer has had to be used for the Plan period it is likely to be because allocated sites have not come forward and may not do so. We therefore consider it incorrect to see this buffer as additional supply beyond the Plan period. We consider that the correct approach would be to apply ten years at 1,113 units per annum plus a further 5% in order to identify a ten-year supply of Safeguarded Land, meaning that the Safeguarded Land should be capable of accommodating 11,168 units.
- 2.4.4 Thirdly, we consider that there is a weak logic and lack of justification to the consideration that 36% of the new homes will be delivered in the Green Belt in line with projections for the Plan period. As discussed elsewhere in this document, we feel that the Urban Capacity Study significantly overestimates the amount of housing that can be delivered in the urban area during the Plan period and so disagree that 36% is a realistic figure for Green Belt provision. Furthermore, the focus on developing urban land first during the Plan period is likely to mean that the supply of such sites will be exhausted by the end of the Plan period; therefore it is highly likely that the requirement for Green Belt land will be greater and not less for the period after the end of the Plan period (2037). In other words, with all potentially suitable urban sites having been allocated in the new Local Plan, what new urban sites, other than potential windfall sites, might remain for the period ten years after? We doubt that this would be sufficient to meet 64% of the projected demand.
- 2.4.5 With regard to the Fiddlers Ferry site (as referred to in para 3.6 of WBC's Preferred Development Option), on which the strategy heavily relies for potential brownfield development land, this is likely to be heavily constrained and contaminated given its existing use. This will affect the viability and timescale for it coming forward for housing, if indeed it does. However, even if we take a best-case scenario the full site is approx. 120 hectares, so assuming that this can be developed at the same rate as applied elsewhere (75% site area @ 30 xdph) then this could deliver up to 2,700 units. This still only represents 24% of the projected need for the Safeguarded Land (11,130 as explained above, discounting the buffer) and so does not materially affect the fact that future capacity within the urban area is being greatly overestimated. There is also an inherent risk to an approach that 'puts all the eggs into one basket' in this way and that large strategic sites can often take much longer to deliver.



### **Distribution of Safeguarded Land**

- 2.4.6 Safeguarded Land, by its nature and on inspection of other Local Plans, is greenfield land at the outer fringes of settlements. In fact, the NPPF (at para 85) specifically instructs local planning authorities to *"identify in their plans areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term needs stretching well beyond the plan period"*.
- 2.4.7 Our main objection regarding the location of Safeguarded Land is that it is proposed to be all located to the east of the Garden City Extension in Warrington. There does not appear to be any detailed analysis and justification for locating all of this land at Warrington. This approach does not allow any of the outlying settlements to meet their housing requirements beyond the Plan period or to provide an additional land resource to offer the flexibility needed to enable their housing needs within the Plan period to be met. Further concentrating growth in Warrington may also weaken the ongoing sustainability of outlying settlements, where local services need to be supported by sufficient housing numbers. It is also likely to force existing residents of the outlying settlements to move to Warrington when they are in need of a new (or first) house, and we believe this does not represent a fair and equal approach to all residents of the Borough.
- 2.4.8 For these reasons, we object to the current spatial approach to Safeguarded Land and recommend that a similar proportion of Safeguarded Land is designated to the outlying settlements. As the Plan develops there will then be a need to consider more accurately how much Safeguarded Land should be designated for each settlement. We feel that it is important to ensure that each settlement has an appropriate amount of Safeguarded land to meet their own housing needs, and that this should be determined by a proper consideration of this need, rather than by an overly supply-led approach. This follows our same logic for the allocation of housing for each settlement, as set out in Section 3 of this document.
- 2.4.9 In addition to meeting housing needs beyond the Plan period, we consider that Safeguarded Land should also form the first line of supply if new housing is needed during the Plan period which cannot be delivered on allocated sites (whether by sites not coming forward or by unmet housing needs leaving the LPA without a five-year housing supply). This view has been supported by Inspectors in appeal decisions (for example APP/P2365/W/15/3132594 Wainhomes Developments Ltd vs West Lancashire Borough Council, 2015). The 'housing delivery test' in the Government's Housing White Paper (2016) requires action to be taken if delivery rates fall below 95% of the annual housing requirement. We recommend that this is used as a trigger to allow the development of Safeguarded Land. This trigger could be



applied to settlements independently (i.e. only allowing Safeguarded Land in Culcheth, for example, to be developed if delivery rates in Culcheth fall below 95%).





### 3.0 Spatial Distribution of New Housing

- 3.1.1 WBC considered and assessed several strategic options for meeting housing needs spatially. In this section, we respond to this emerging strategy for the spatial provision of new housing.
- 3.1.2 Option 2 proposes that the majority of Green Belt release is adjacent to main urban area (Warrington) with incremental growth in outlying settlements. We agree that the **high level spatial option 2 should be the preferred option** (as set out at para 4.49 of the Preferred Development Option). We believe that every settlement should have its own needs met through appropriate growth. Put simply, we do not believe that an existing resident of an outlying settlement should be forced to move to Warrington when they are in need of a new home.

### 3.2 Approach to Growth in Warrington

- 3.2.1 One should first consider the proposed approach for growth of Warrington as this is where the vast majority of new homes are to be located, and this will have significant implications for housing allocations across the Borough.
- 3.2.2 On analysing the proposed Option 2 approach, it soon becomes apparent that the proposed distribution of new homes represents a significant re-distribution of population to the Borough's main town. The tables overleaf (Tables 3.1 and 3.2), using the existing figures from the Preferred Development Option, show that the percentage of population in Warrington town would increase from 86.3% persons to 95.1%, or 96.4% persons if Safeguarded Land is also taken into consideration. This represents a significant increase.
- 3.2.3 Whilst this may be the intention of the Preferred Development Option, it is a rather radical approach that, we feel, has not been made sufficiently transparent in the Preferred Development Option, or suitably justified and evidenced. By concentrating growth in Warrington, by more than a 10% shift, there will be knock-on effects to the outlying settlements and their long-term sustainability and these effects need to be fully understood. In our view, a better approach to the distribution of new homes would be to preserve the existing balance of populations within an overall context of growth for all settlements. We explore this further at 3.3 below.

**Table 3.1 – Proportion of housing target between Warrington and outlying settlements**

Settlement	Population	% Total Popn	Proposed new homes (Table 22)	% Total total popn after delivery (@ 2.35 people per home)
Warrington	165,456*	86.3%	23,030	95.1%
- within urban area			(15,429)	
- Green Belt release			(7,601)	
Lymm	11,192	5.8%	500	2.1%
Culcheth	6,644	3.5%	300	1.2%
Burtonwood	3,219	1.7%	150	0.6%
Winwick	1,954	1.0%	90	0.4%
Croft	1,367	0.7%	60	0.2%
Glazebury	1,123	0.6%	50	0.2%
Hollins Green	837	0.4%	40	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	191,792	100	24,220	100%

\* Warrington urban area, mid 2016 estimate [ONS, 2017]

**Table 3.2 – Proportion of housing target between Warrington and outlying settlements, including Safeguarded Land**

Settlement	Population	% Total Popn	Proposed new homes (Table 22)	% Total total popn after delivery (@ 2.35 people per home)
Warrington	165,456*	86.3%	23,030	96.4%
- within urban area			(15,429)	
- Green Belt release			(7,601)	
- Safeguarded land			(8,595)**	
Lymm	11,192	5.8%	500	2.1%
Culcheth	6,644	3.5%	300	1.2%
Burtonwood	3,219	1.7%	150	0.6%
Winwick	1,954	1.0%	90	0.4%
Croft	1,367	0.7%	60	0.2%
Glazebury	1,123	0.6%	50	0.2%
Hollins Green	837	0.4%	40	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	191,792	100	24,220	100%

\* Warrington urban area, mid 2016 estimate [ONS, 2017]

\*\* using Preferred Development Option figure for homes requirement for safeguarded land, this is assigned to Warrington whether in urban area or in Green Belt

### 3.3 Approach to Growth for Outlying Settlements

- 3.3.1 From another perspective, we must also consider the level of growth proposed in Option 2 for the outlying settlements, and the implications that this will have on housing and growth needs for these settlements.
- 3.3.2 The approach to determining the level of housing provision for the outlying settlement appears to have been derived by applying a blanket 10% expansion to each settlement according to their existing population (see Table 2.2 below). We agree that using the existing population is a useful starting point to consider the relative share of new housing for each settlement is a valid approach. However, we consider that applying a uniform 10% figure is an overly arbitrary approach that is unlikely to meet the varied housing needs and

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reflect the different characteristics of each settlement. Some settlements, for example, could potentially accommodate up to 15% growth without harming the existing character and with appropriate support from existing and enhanced community infrastructure provision. We have explored this further in Section 4.

- 3.3.3 The actual housing figure applied to the outlying settlements is 1,190 (rather than the rounded 1,000) and we see that the proportion of housing allocated to each settlement very closely matches their relative populations (see table below), proposing a 10% growth for each one. This therefore suggests that existing population was the basis of calculating the proportion of new homes, rather than by considering 'indicative Green Belt capacity' as Table 22 of the Preferred Development Option suggests.

**Table 3.3 – Proportion of housing target across outlying settlements**

Settlement	Population	% Outlying Settlements Total Popn	Proposed new homes (Table 22)	% Outlying Settlements Total New Homes	% Growth of each settlement (@ 2.35 people per home)
Lymm	11192	42.5	500	42.0	10.5%
Culcheth	6644	25.2	300	25.2	10.6%
Burtonwood	3219	12.2	150	12.6	10.9%
Winwick	1954	7.4	90	7.6	10.8%
Croft	1367	5.2	60	5.0	10.3%
Glazebury	1123	4.3	50	4.2	10.5%
Hollins Green	837	3.2	40	3.4	11.2%
<b>Total</b>	26,336	100	1,190	100	10.6%.

- 3.3.4 We agree that this population-based approach is a good initial approach to dividing the number of units across the outlying settlements. Lymm and Culcheth are the two largest settlements by a considerable degree and are therefore likely to have correspondingly higher housing needs. They also have the most extensive range and quality of shops, community facilities and transport links, as summarised in WBC's Settlement Profiles. This makes Lymm and Culcheth the most sustainable locations for housing growth.
- 3.3.5 Instead of applying an arbitrary 10% across the board, however, we feel that the best approach would be to first objectively assess the specific housing needs of each settlement,

considering factors such as demographic and socio-economic profile, economic activity, jobs and community infrastructure provision and existing housing stock. There should then be a pro-active approach to identifying the most appropriate sites to deliver the quantum of housing required. At the moment, we feel that, although more detailed work has been done as part of the Settlement Profiles, this more considered approach has not been reflected in the proposed approach of allocating 10% growth across all settlements.

- 3.3.6 In terms of housing land supply the Preferred Development Option (at para 4.58) states *"from the call for sites exercise, it was established that incremental growth adjacent to the outlying settlements would be capable of accommodating 1,000 dwellings"*. This is true, but in some cases it would be capable of delivering much more than this. The methodology for calculating this is only described in overview in the Settlement Profiles document but appears to involve considering sites that have been put forward in the recent Call for Sites exercise, discounting certain 'fringe' sites that are poorly related to the settlement and then considering only those sites which have been assessed as having 'moderate' or 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt. Whilst we agree with this approach, we consider that a more realistic and opportunity-led approach should be taken whereby sustainability and deliverability are key considerations alongside Green Belt contribution.

### **Implications for Culcheth**

- 3.3.7 We have undertaken this exercise ourselves for **Culcheth** referencing only 'Parcel 1' of our site at Warrington Road (R18/097). This is provided in Section 5.
- 3.3.8 For comparative assessment, we have used WBC's approach of applying a 75% net developable area (unless the Call for Site response includes a net developable area) and then a density of 30 dwellings per hectare to estimate capacity. This indicates that the potential for new homes on 'weak' contribution Green Belt sites is approximately correct for Culcheth at the 300 homes indicated for incremental growth. Delivery of this scale of growth could be served by existing and enhanced community infrastructure.
- 3.3.9 We are aware that the Planning Practice Guidance states: *"unmet housing need (including for traveller sites) is unlikely to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and other harm to constitute the "very special circumstances" justifying inappropriate development on a site within the Green Belt"*. The subject site at Culcheth is assessed as making a 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt, with the other assessed parcels all making a 'strong contribution'. This therefore supports allocation of the subject site to deliver the incremental growth identified.



- 3.3.10 As we consider this location to be the most sustainable, additional land to the east and within the same ownership ('Parcel 2') is also submitted as being available for the delivery of new homes and/or community infrastructure to the deliver any additional growth that could support a wider opportunity to increase sustainability and social infrastructure in the settlement.



### 4.0 Growth Options for Warrington

- 4.1.1 The Preferred Development Options considers several growth options for the town of Warrington. Option 2, which represents a garden city suburb of 6,000 homes to the south-east and a sustainable urban extension of 1,800 homes to the south-west, is selected as a preferred option.
- 4.1.2 We agree that **Option 2** should be the Council's preferred option, and support the Council's intentions to meet housing need in the proposed locations south and south-west of Warrington. We encourage the Council to fully consider further evidence in relation to the site through detailed masterplanning, site capacity, site constraints and representations made to this preferred development options consultation, to fully scope-out likely deliverability. Should further evidence reveal that the proposed Garden City Suburb area cannot deliver the 6,000 units envisaged then we consider that the remaining units should be redistributed to the outlying settlements and the South-West Warrington extension.
- 4.1.3 The majority of the greenfield allocations for new homes will be located in the Garden City Suburb extension to the south of the town. At approximately 6,000 units this places considerable risk in a strategy whereby a large proportion of the Council's housing need will be met in one location. The extent of the area appears to be largely determined by the Green Belt assessment of a pre-defined land parcel. The willingness and capacity of landowners to deliver this extension is also far from certain, with the area only partially covered by Call for Sites representations. This approach is not delivery or market-led and there may well be significant challenges in delivering all the land parcels within this extension area to deliver the full number of homes envisaged. We also note that there has been strong local opposition, including by local Members, adding further difficulties to delivery. The Area Profile summarises that this extension will require significant new infrastructure: four new primary schools, one secondary school, a district centre, up to three local centres and significant health and recreation infrastructure. Delivering a 6,000 home extension here, within the timescales envisaged, is therefore considered to be extremely challenging.
- 4.1.4 We feel that a better, more flexible approach would be to follow Option 2 in principle but to allocate more land in the South West Warrington Extension and the outlying settlements, to provide better management of risk and security in delivering the required number of units.



## 5.0 Growth Options for Outlying Settlements

5.1.1 The Council's strategy has been to consider a series of distinct scenarios for the growth of settlements. As set out in the 'Settlement Profiles - Outlying Settlements' document, these are:

- (i) 'Incremental growth' - based on a level of development that could be accommodated by existing infrastructure, subject to minor expansion of that infrastructure, up to 10% of settlement size.
- (ii) 'Sustainable settlement extension' - based on a new or expanded primary school, taking into account available sites.
- (iii) 'Site maximisation' - where there are 'call for site' options / Green Belt SHLAA sites which could provide a larger scale extension.

5.1.2 Under these scenarios, a 10% growth option has been assessed for each settlement, alongside scenarios for the other two options that consider much larger levels of homes for sustainable urban extensions (i.e. 1,400 homes for Lymm and Culcheth). Unsurprisingly, the incremental growth option is favoured for all the outlying settlements and the preferred high level option is for incremental growth of all outlying settlements and, as summarised in Table 2.2 above, where 10% growth is proposed for each one. 10% is deemed to be the maximum level of growth that can be accommodated "without changing the character of the respective settlement". Alternatively, the scenario with a higher number of homes is designed to completely support a new two form entry (2FE) primary school, which is set at 1,400 homes. We consider it would be useful to see the evidence behind this.

5.1.3 Whilst we do not disagree that high level option spatial option 2 is preferred and that the growth of the outlying settlements should be incremental; we feel that applying a 10% maximum level of growth across the board is overly simplistic and does not consider the differing character of settlements and the differing characteristics of site which may enable them to accommodate greater levels of growth without compromising settlement character.

5.1.4 Similarly, we question why the scenarios jump straight to a 2FE primary school without considering a 1FE primary school or other options for school place provision which could support a level of expansion above 10% but much lower than 1,400 homes. A large amount of data and analysis on community infrastructure provision has been provided in the Settlement Profiles and we feel these should be used to determine a better informed more specific approach to identifying a maximum level of growth for each settlement. There is no



reason in theory why this could not result in a level of growth at, say, 12% or 15% whilst still representing incremental growth that does not compromise the character of the settlement and providing a suitable level of service provision.

5.1.5 Furthermore, as a general point, the opportunity provided by new housing to better support existing community infrastructure and, crucially, to enable the enhancement and provision of new and existing facilities, should be seen as a positive feature, especially when presenting proposals to the local community, who will benefit from this. The existing approach too often presents the situation as one in which the current level of service provision in a settlement is a limiting factor on growth; rather than seeing new housing as a positive opportunity to provide new and enhanced facilities (and better support existing services and businesses) which will be a benefit to the local community.

5.1.6 Therefore, we suggest that the incremental growth option should be in the range of 10-15%, depending on the housing needs of each settlement; the ability of sites to accommodate development without compromising character; and the ability for growth to enable new community infrastructure to be provided. We have examined the community infrastructure in more detail in this situation with regard to Culcheth, based on the information provided in WBC's Settlement Profiles. For this initial assessment, we are considering only primary schools, high schools and GP surgeries, as the key community infrastructure and potentially the hardest to expand. The ability of the subject site to accommodate growth without compromising character, and that of other key potential sites in the settlement, is explored in Section 7. As described earlier, we recommend that WBC undertake further detailed work to assess specific housing needs in each settlement, according to demographic profile, socio-economic characteristics, projected economic growth, existing housing provision and historic housebuilding rates.

### **Social Infrastructure Capacity in Culcheth**

5.1.7 Culcheth has three existing primary schools (all 1FE) and Culcheth High School (8FE). The Settlement Profile summarises that these are all close to capacity but that Newchurch Primary School has some potential for on-site expansion. However, we note that all three primary schools are single storey and sit within their own grounds, making them capable of expansion by either outward expansion or an additional storey. The High school is described as having no potential for expansion but being capable of absorbing incremental growth without significant impact – we would like to understand the exact scale of growth that could be accommodated in this way, as it may be above 10%.



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- 5.1.8 We have also recently engaged with the Community Primary School within Culcheth directly opposite the site's location. The school have informed us that there is expansion potential within the existing school boundaries and the construction of a new wing to the Primary School would enable the school to increase capacity to a 2FE primary school increasing capacity.
- 5.1.9 Should land at Warrington Road, Culcheth be identified as a chosen allocation Story Homes will continue to engage with the school about the design and facilitation of upgrading the school in order for it to absorb additional school children. We would welcome discussions with the Education Department of the Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss this opportunity.
- 5.1.10 The village has three GP surgeries, all of which are capable of growth, one having space for significant growth. On balance, we feel Culcheth is one of the most sustainable settlements in the Borough with an extensive range and quantum of local services. It could potentially support incremental growth above 10% and we feel that the potential for existing facilities to support this, and their potential for expansion, should be investigated in greater detail as the Local Plan moves forward.

### **Potential housing supply in Culcheth**

- 5.1.11 We have applied WBC's approach to estimating capacity by considering sites that have been put forward in the recent Call for Sites exercise, excluding 'fringe' sites as defined in the plan within the Settlement Profile. We have then included only those sites which have been assessed as having 'moderate' or 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt.
- 5.1.12 For comparative assessment of capacity, we have used WBC's approach in applying a 75% net developable area (unless the Call for Site response includes a net developable area) and then a density of 30 dwellings per hectare to estimate capacity (as described in para 3.4 of the Preferred Development Option). Please refer to table 5.1 overleaf.

**Table 5.1 – Potential housing supply for Culcheth (Call for sites)**

Reference	Site area (net developable area if known) / ha	Submitted Capacity	Realistic Capacity (using net area or 75%, @ 30 dph)	Green Belt contribution
R18/041 (Land at Kirknall Hall Farm)	Only approx 3.2 ha in GB 'weak' area. Net area: 20ha	500	72 units (in GB weak area)	Strong / Weak
<b>R18/097</b> <b>Land at Warrington Road</b>	8.2 ha approx (Parcel 1) SUBMITTED  Further land for potential expansion (Parcel 2 at 4.45ha).	200	Parcel 1 – 220 units  Parcel 1&2 – 300 units	Weak
<b>Total</b>			<b>257 (372)</b>	

5.1.13 This establishes that the estimated housing capacity is largely in line with the 10% growth proposed (300 homes). It demonstrates that for Culcheth:

- 300 units can be delivered over two locations in the settlement using entirely 'weak contribution' sites; however
- 300 units can also be met in one location combining parcels 1 and 2 at Warrington Road which are in a more sustainable location and would enable the delivery of economic, social and environmental benefits.

5.1.14 This therefore makes it even more important to release and allocate land at Warrington Road, which can potentially deliver Culcheth's identified housing need in addition to facilitating the delivery of community benefits and facilities.



## 6.0 Critique of Evidence Base Documents

### 6.1 Green Belt Assessment and Update

6.1.1 The Green Belt Assessment is undertaken at two levels, for both 'general areas' and specific land parcels. In terms of the general area assessment, the subject site in Culcheth falls within Area 2, which has been assessed as being of 'moderate' value. We do not have comments on this level of assessment.

6.1.2 We do, however, have the following comments to make on the parcel assessments.

#### **Culcheth**

6.1.3 The site at Warrington Road in Culcheth represents the majority of parcel CH9, which is assessed overall as making a 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt. We agree with this analysis. Culcheth has 15 land parcels within the assessment: three of these (including CH9) are rated as making a 'weak' contribution; with the remaining twelve all rated as making a 'strong' contribution. This therefore means that the site is amongst the most favourable for development in terms of assessing impacts on the Green Belt in addition to being the most sustainable and accessible for future occupiers.

### 6.2 Urban Capacity Statement

6.2.1 Our first point regarding the Urban Capacity Statement (2016) is that the basis of estimating the capacity of the sites covered by the Council's Masterplan (figure 4 within the Preferred Development Option consultation document, pg.35) has not been explained and is poorly presented. The Statement presents only the area-wide Masterplan and a summary table of sites, allowing no cross-referencing between the two. It would be useful to see the site boundaries on the masterplan and to know the size in hectares of each site so that an understanding of density can be gained. The masterplan notation does appear to suggest varying densities but it would be good to understand the density range assumed for each and what this would mean in terms of the type of housing proposed.

6.2.2 We also have the following comments on the masterplan:

- The masterplan appears to propose housing on virtually all employment land and areas of other significant uses (Riverside Retail Park for example). Whilst we understand that this is a capacity exercise only it is unrealistic to consider a situation in which such a significant area of employment land is lost, especially given WBC's 'New City' aspirations.

Many existing business will not wish to cease or relocate and those that do may often experience difficulty in finding appropriate alternative sites.

- The masterplan does not appear to have had any consideration of potential major constraints, showing for example new housing within areas flood zone 2 and even flood zone 3. This makes it highly unrealistic and casts major doubts on its credibility for estimating capacity.
- The masterplan includes all potential SHLAA sites within its extent but then subtracts the number of units from the SHLAA. However, it does not present any schemes proposed for these sites nor show the boundaries of the SHLAA sites, instead it washes over them with the masterplan proposals. In reality the need for these sites to come forward separately will result in reduced design efficiencies and consequently reduced capacities. The masterplan should have shown and worked with the boundaries of SHLAA sites.
- More generally, the masterplan assumes all the land coming forward as a comprehensive scheme. In reality, not all of the sites will come forward and fragmented land ownerships will create awkwardly shaped sites that will result in less efficient layouts. Different interfaces will also have to be considered for employment uses that are retained. This will lead to significantly reduced capacities.
- Finally, the masterplan assumes that all of the land shown will come forward. This depends on the housing market being able to deliver viable schemes on all sites. This is not likely to be the case, especially as, by their nature, most of these are former employment sites and likely to require ground remediation, and many are in lower value housing areas.

6.2.3 For these reasons, we believe that the Urban Capacity exercise is significantly flawed and, at 15,429 units, significantly over-estimates the number of dwellings that the urban area may be expected to accommodate. It is therefore likely that further Green Belt land will need to be released in order to meet the housing need if not delivered in the urban area.



### **7.0 Warrington Road, Culcheth – Site Assessment**

#### **7.1 Land ownership and commitment to delivery**

- 7.1.1 The site is within a single ownership and is represented by a property agent. Story Homes have an agreement with the landowner to bring the site forward for residential development (subject to its release from Green Belt). There are no legal or ownership constraints to its delivery for housing.
- 7.1.2 Story Homes are committed to bringing this site forward for housing and will progress a scheme as soon as the site is allocated. This will involve pre-application discussions with Warrington Council and public engagement.

#### **7.2 Environmental Context**

- 7.2.1 The site sits to the immediate east of the existing village in a triangle of land between Warrington Road and Holcroft Lane. A watercourse forms the south-eastern boundary of Parcel 1. There are mature trees and hedgerows along most of the Warrington Road frontage and a mature tree belt lies alongside the watercourse. This development would therefore represent a small but well screened extension to the village on its eastern edge. Impact on the openness of the surrounding Green Belt and on surrounding landscape character would be limited by the defensible edges of the site.
- 7.2.2 The other sites put forward in the Call for Sites exercise generally represent larger scale incursions into the surrounding countryside and would have greater impact on the surrounding landscape character and Green Belt. This includes the large expanse of land to the north-east of the village (R18/128) which would represent an approximately 50% expansion in the size of the built-up area and lacks defensible boundaries. Other sites are completely divorced from the built-up area. This is reflected in the Green Belt Assessment, which assesses all of the other sites as being in land that makes a 'strong contribution' to the Green Belt.
- 7.2.3 The only exception is site R19/041, to the south-west of the village. The Green Belt contribution of this land was assessed as being 'weak' on only the easternmost field (approximately 20% of this site), with the remainder making a 'strong' contribution. Land at Warrington Road, Culcheth is therefore the most suitable and sustainable site in Culcheth in terms of impact on the surrounding landscape and the only option for the growth of Culcheth without requiring land that makes a strong contribution to the Green Belt.



### 7.3 Landscape Character

- 7.3.1 The site is located on the western edge of the village of Culcheth. The Warrington Road / A574 runs along the north-western boundary of the site. The site is located on the eastern edge of the Culcheth village and is currently used as arable farmland. The site is an irregular shape with its north-western boundary aligned with the Warrington Road / A574. Beyond Warrington Road to the west is the education complex made up of Culcheth Community Primary School, Culcheth High School and Culcheth Community Campus. The residential area of Culcheth village is situated beyond this to the west.
- 7.3.2 Holcroft Lane runs along a section of the northern boundary which has existing residential development located along it on the northern side of the road opposite the site. At the junction of Holcroft Lane and Warrington Road adjoining the sites northern boundary is the Little Lions Cattery. The south-eastern boundary of the site is made up of ditch that passes north east to south west. A rural landscape of small to medium sized arable fields interspersed with residential areas is located to the north, east and south of site.
- 7.3.3 The school complex to the west of the site has two Public Rights of Way (PROW) passing east west through the grounds and along its northern boundary starting on Warrington Road opposite the site and 100m to the north of it that lead to Culcheth residential area to the west and link to other public footpaths within the village and the rural landscape beyond. Additional footpaths are located to the northern boundary of the site on Warrington Road passing south to north. Further along Warrington Road to the north east a PROW passes north to south linking to Holcroft Lane 300m to the east of the site. A PROW located 400m to the south of the site passes west to east along the northern edge residential area and into the rural landscape to the east.
- 7.3.4 Beyond the village there are a number of land uses within the landscape study area. This includes a mixed rural landscape of irregular, small and medium sized arable fields, large villages, HMP Risley prison 1.8km south east of the site and areas of industry including the Birchwood Technology Park 2km to the south of the site. A number of A-roads cross the study area and the M62 motorway passes on a west east alignment 2km to the south of the site. The Liverpool-Manchester train line passes west east 1.3km to the north of the site. Just over 1km from the site to the east, flows the Glaze Brook passing broadly on a north-south alignment.

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- 7.3.5 The Culcheth (Newchurch) conservation area is located 1.4km from the site on the north west edge of Culcheth village. The nearest listed structure is the Grade II listed Milestone on Warrington Road 150m north of the site. There are a further 4 listed buildings within Culcheth village, all Grade II listed; the closest 900m from the site to the south west.
- 7.3.6 There are no designated landscapes within 1km of the site. The nearest designated site is the Cadishead and Little Wooden Moss Wildlife Trust Reserve 1.5 miles to the east of the site. The Holcroft Moss Wildlife Trust Reserve is located immediately south of the M62 motorway 2.4km south east of the site. Astley & Bedford Mosses SSSI is located 2.6km to the north east of the site. An area of Access Land adjoins the SSSI on its western boundary and there are further Access Areas to the north.
- 7.3.7 An authorised landfill site is located 1.2miles to the south of the site. The landfill site is designated as an authorised landfill site from Environment Agency DATA SETS 2013. Aerial photograph mapping from 2017 shows the site is no longer in the use and has been capped with a series of footpaths and soft landscape treatments now on the site.
- 7.3.8 Glaze Brook is a broad shallow valley that passes north to south 1km to the east of the site and at its lowest is 4-10m AOD. The topography gently rises from the brook to the west with the site being located in a gently sloping area at 21-25m AOD. From here the land rises up to the ridgeline to the west at 41-45m AOD over 2km from the site and to 56-60m AOD approximately 1.5km south of the site at the former landfill site.
- 7.3.9 In conclusion, the Site is not recognised as having a special landscape quality and is not the subject of any landscape designations or located in close proximity to a designated area that would be affected by the development. Residential development at the Site could be brought forward in a manner which was sympathetic to its local landscape and townscape context, with any landscape and visual effects minimised and further offset by a strong landscape strategy to ensure that the development was considerate of its setting.

## 7.4 Sustainability

- 7.4.1 We have undertaken analysis of the location of key community facilities in Culcheth and their accessibility from the subject site (see Figure 2 below).
- 7.4.2 This analysis shows that the site is very well located with most key facilities lying within easy walking distance. Culcheth is a sustainable centre with a wide range of facilities, including primary schools, a high school, GP surgery, leisure centre and food store.

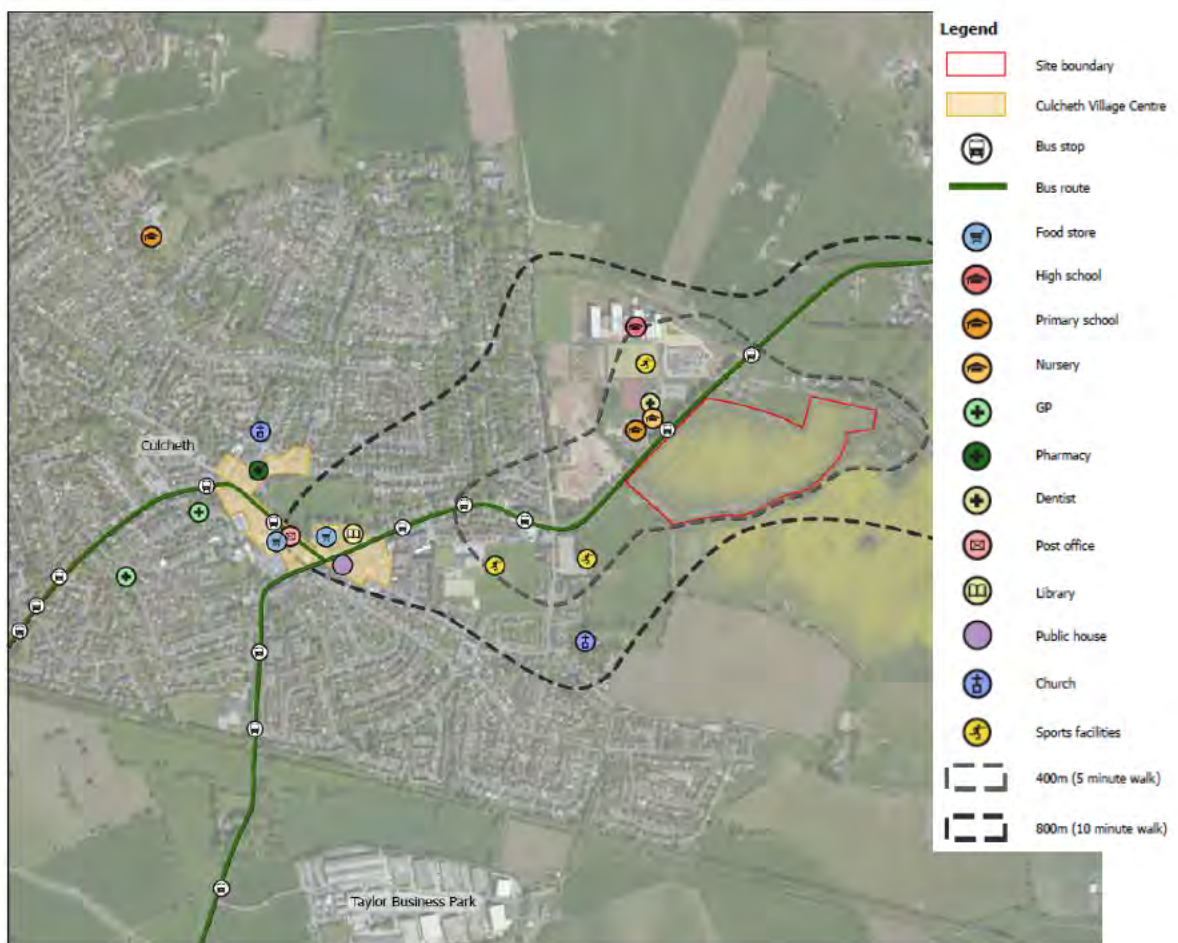


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7.4.3 This makes the site sustainable; there will be not be a reliance on the private car and most journeys can be done on foot. The site is especially well sited in relation to education needs, with both the high school and community primary school lying on the opposite side of Warrington Road, within a five minute walk. Both of these schools also serve as wider community hubs – with a day nursery and children’s dentist being located alongside the primary school; and the leisure centre alongside the high school.

7.4.4 The site is also well served by buses: the no.19 service which runs every 30 minutes from Warrington to Earlestown and also provides a direct link to Leigh, Burtonwood and Croft. There is a bus stop on the northern boundary of the site which in addition to the 19 service also provides access to number 28, 28A, 28E, 192 and 193 services. Taylor Business Park offers a significant number of jobs, lying a short distance to the south of Culcheth, and is accessible by cycle or buses via Warrington Road.

**Figure 2: Local Facilities in Culcheth**



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- 7.4.5 The site compares favourably against other potential sites from the Call for Sites exercise in terms of sustainability. No other parcel of land in Culcheth put forward can compete with the subject site in terms of accessibility to both the village centre and the services hub around the two schools.
- 7.4.6 Site R18/041 is similarly accessible to the village centre but is much further from the high school and from the regular bus service on Warrington Road. Significantly, this site lies to the rear of existing houses on residential streets; it lacks the strong vehicle and pedestrian connections with the existing settlement that land at Warrington Road offers.

### **7.5 Technical Deliverability**

- 7.5.1 The Site is not subject to or near to any restrictive environmental designations. There are no technical or environmental constraints which present an obstacle to development.

#### **Consultation Distances**

- 7.5.2 Story Homes have engaged with National Grid and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as part of their technical due diligence investigations. Although the site sits within consultation distances for the National High Pressure Gas Pipeline (Transco ref. 1038, 15 Feeder Crank / Warrington) that runs in a south to north-east direction across the site, our investigations have demonstrated that the Council's policy map has not been updated to take account of upgrades to the pipeline's specification in recent years.
- 7.5.3 National Grid, the pipeline operator has informed Story Homes that the pipeline has been heavy brick walled reducing the risks of the accident hazard pipeline. Story Homes have taken this information to the HSE and have had the pipeline specification re-modelled to understand how heavy brick walling reduces the size of the required consultation distances. It has been demonstrated that the heavy brick walling reduces the inner and middle consultation distances to 3 metres either side of the pipeline and that the outer consultation distance is now within 310 metres.
- 7.5.4 Further to the reassessment, Story Homes have prepared the illustrative masterplan drawing reference DWG:019-01 which shows the inner/middle consultation zones unpopulated with housing and used as a public footpath.
- 7.5.5 The Masterplan shows housing will be situated in the outer HSE consultation zone only and in accordance with the HSE 'Land use and planning methodology' the proposed development is therefore defined as sensitivity level 3.

- 7.5.6 HSE have prepared a bespoke letter in relation to the proposed masterplan (appendix 2) which concludes that ***"HSE would not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission for the proposed development."***

### **Ecology and Trees**

- 7.5.7 The Site is not subject to any ecological designations, such as SSSI's, SBI's or Local Nature Reserves, and there are no such designations nearby. The land is also subject to an active agricultural use which will lead to poor biodiversity.
- 7.5.8 At planning application stage, detailed surveys of the flora and fauna will be undertaken to ensure that there will be no harm to any high value species. There are opportunities to improve biodiversity at the Site through the provision of enhanced habitats, including new green space.
- 7.5.9 Given that the Site is currently used for agriculture, it contains very few trees. All existing high value trees and hedgerows will be retained wherever possible alongside significant new tree planting, to enhance the character of the new development. Overall there will be an increase in the number of trees at the Site.

### **Flooding and Drainage**

- 7.5.10 The entirety of the Site is located within Flood Zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Map which means that it is considered to have a low risk of flooding. Initial investigations have indicated that Site drainage can be achieved via an appropriately designed Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS).

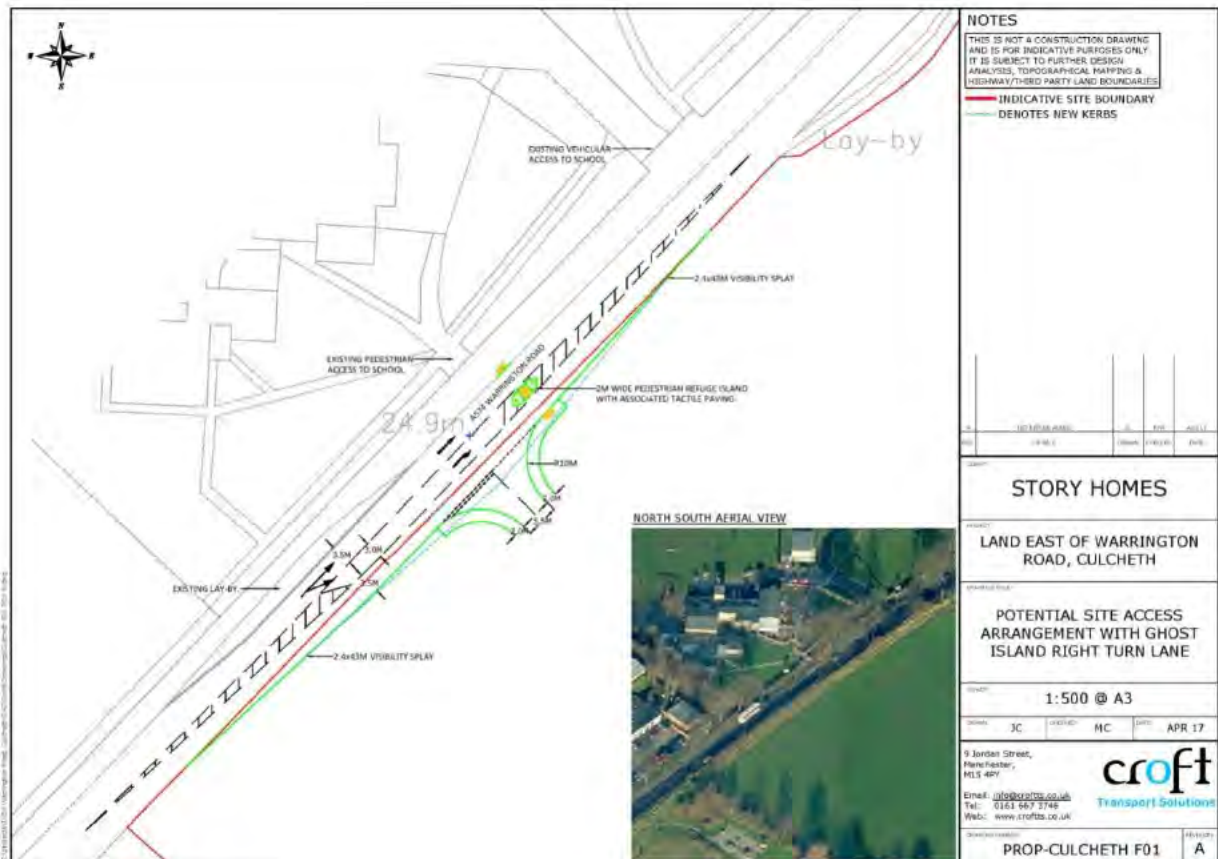
### **Highways**

- 7.5.11 A detailed appraisal of the highway network and access constraints and opportunities has been undertaken by Croft Transport Solutions. Vehicular access to the Site can be achieved both off Warrington Road and from Holcroft Lane. It is proposed to serve the site through a primary and secondary access solution.
- 7.5.12 The main vehicular access located on Warrington Road can accommodate a formal priority junction arrangement with standard geometric parameters for residential developments with a 5.5 metres wide carriageway, footway on both sides of 2 metres wide and 6 metre radii.
- 7.5.13 Sufficient visibility can be achieved in both directions of at least 2.4 metres by 43 metres which ensures it complies with the guidance in Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2. All of this geometry can be accommodated within either the site boundary or within the

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current limits of adopted highway.

- 7.5.14 This junction has been shown in figure 3 (Drawing Number PROP-CULCHETH-F01) and demonstrates that the proposed vehicular access can be adequately accommodated.



**Figure 3: Proposed access drawing 'PROP-CULCHETH-F01'**

- 7.5.15 If Parcel 2 is required to assist in the delivery of additional housing and community facilities, the number of units the currently proposed access could serve would be at least 300. Furthermore, if a secondary access were to be provided along either the Warrington Road or the Holcroft Lane frontages then this would clearly allow the potential for a much higher number of units, subject to the standard junction capacity analyses for the two site access points and the surrounding highway network.
- 7.5.16 The frontage of the proposed site along Warrington Road provides for a comprehensive highway strategy to be facilitated in this area, entirely within the adopted highway and Story Homes controlled land. Story Homes would welcome discussions with the Council's highways and transport department as soon practically possible.



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- 7.5.17 There are no capacity constraints to the local highway network which would provide an issue for the additional traffic generated by the site and this will be demonstrated in detail within a Transport Assessment that would accompany any formal detailed application for this site.

### **7.6 Potential form of development**

- 7.6.1 The site (Parcel 1) can accommodate up to 220 high quality family homes comprising a range of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed homes. The proposed scheme will retain a consistent reference to the character of Culcheth and will embody the key principles of sustainability, promoting healthy lifestyles and a high quality of life through the enhancement of public rights of way and access to safe and multi-functional green spaces. The properties will be generously spaced and softened by a network of green infrastructure where open spaces will function individually, but will together add up to a comprehensive green environment which permeates throughout the development.
- 7.6.2 The layout has been designed so that a unique sense of arrival is created immediately upon arriving at the scheme. Houses will face outwards towards Warrington Road set back behind attractively landscaped green spaces. A vista towards the arrival green has been created providing a welcoming and inviting environment further connecting to nodal points within the scheme to frame and feature dwellings and assist with navigation.

### **7.7 Community and economic benefits**

- 7.7.1 As part of this development Story Homes will be providing the policy requirement of 30% affordable housing. The exact number of units will be determined through a detailed planning application and led by initial discussions with Warrington Council to determine the local need for social rented and discounted sale homes. This will have significant social benefits for the local community.
- 7.7.2 In addition to helping WBC meet the housing needs of the borough, the development of the site will provide significant social, environmental and economic benefits to the local community. The presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF includes social, environmental and economic sustainability.
- 7.7.3 The provision of new housing (and especially the affordable housing element) is a clear social benefit. The Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy identifies Culcheth as a neighbourhood centre (a 'larger village centre') in its Vision (p.72) and in Policy SN4. Objective 72 is to "maintain and enhance centres identified in the retail hierarchy throughout

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the borough as accessible, key locations for shops, services and community facilities”.

- 7.7.4 The allocation of the subject site for housing will play an important role in contributing to this objective and realising the vision. It will provide an increase to the local catchment population, which will help to support the shops and public services that exist in the village, with potential additional improvements funded through planning contributions. Furthermore, there will be additional economic benefits in terms of construction jobs and training, and additional tax revenues.
- 7.7.5 The Home Builders Federation have produced a useful tool to estimate the value of these wider economic benefits (<http://www.hbf.co.uk/index.php?id=3197>). For 220 new homes (Parcel 1) this is estimated to:
- Support the employment of 946 people
  - Provide 8 apprentices, graduates or trainees
  - Generate £2,200,000 in tax revenue, including £282,920 in Council Tax revenue.
- 7.7.6 If the scheme were to include Parcel 2, there is the potential for the wider site to deliver 300 homes in this location Using the HBF tool this is estimated to:
- Support the employment of 1,290 people
  - Provide 12 apprentices, graduates or trainees
  - Generate £3,000,000 in tax revenue, including £385,800 in Council Tax revenue.
- 7.7.7 Story Homes have provided further information about the values of the Company within their vision brochure demonstrating their investment into apprenticeships and graduates as a key area of their business.
- 7.7.8 Through local engagement with the Culcheth Community Primary School Story Homes are proposing to provide a new pedestrian crossing on Warrington Road. In addition to providing improved pedestrian access for residents to the High School, and the primary school this also serve to slow traffic on Warrington Road, which help motorists turn out of the educational facilities. This will therefore benefit the existing community too. These proposals are subject to detailed transport work and engagement with the local highways authority.
- 7.7.9 Story Homes have also considered further improvements to this stretch of Warrington Road seeking to improve the pickup and drop-off process surrounding the nearby educational facilities and the bus lay-by's to improve traffic flows at peak periods. We would welcome a

meeting with the Council highways and education departments to establish how these improvements can be brought forward within the adopted highway and our controlled land.

- 7.7.10 In addition to a network of green infrastructure throughout the site, Story Homes are also proposing to provide a network of public footpaths across the site that utilise the recreational value of the new green spaces in addition to proving links to and from existing recreation areas in Culcheth, in particular the playing fields located to the west of the site. Our engagement has revealed that the existing play area/skate park in the adjacent playing fields are unlit and can often encourage aspects of anti-social behaviour when dark. We would like to explore with the Council how we can look to discourage this behaviour and improve the facility offer in this location.

### **7.8 Summary and Comparison**

- 7.8.1 In summary, it has been demonstrated that land at Warrington Road, Culcheth is the most suitable and sustainable site to receive a proportion of Culcheth's housing needs. In comparison with other potential growth sites in the village, the site will have only a limited impact on the Green Belt and on the character of the surrounding landscape. The site has been shown to be a sustainable site: it is well located in terms of its accessibility to key local facilities and its development will provide significant social and economic benefits to the existing community
- 7.8.2 When assessed as a wider site including both parcel 1 and 2, the wider benefits of releasing land in this location from the Green Belt to meet the entirety of Culcheth's housing needs can be realised. We have demonstrated that the site can successfully deliver 300 homes in addition to other community, social and environmental benefits. .
- 7.8.3 Finally, technical work undertaken has demonstrated that the proposed residential development is deliverable and that there are no constraints which present an obstacle to development. For these reasons, we believe there is a strong case for the allocation of this land for residential development to meet identified housing needs in Culcheth.
- 7.8.4 Story Homes encourage the Council to consider the supplementary vision brochure as part of our submission.



**Appendix 1:**

**Site Location Plan: Warrington Road, Culcheth**







**Appendix 2:**

Bespoke letter from HSE with Masterplan ref: DWG:019-01  
(16<sup>th</sup> June 2017)

**By e mail:**

██████████ ██████████  
Story Homes Ltd  
Acklehurst Business Park,  
Foxhole Rd, Chorley,  
Lancashire,  
PR7 1NY.

HSE Ref: ██████████

Date: 16 June 2017

Dear ██████████

**Pre Application Advice Ref D830 : HSE pre-application advice on proposed development at Warrington Rd, Culcheth resulting from HSE's re-assessment of the adjacent area of thick walled pipeline (15 Feeder Crank / Warrington).**

1. Thank you for your request for pre-application advice relating to the proposed development at Warrington Rd, Culcheth.
2. Your initial request involved the reassessment of the risks from a section of major accident hazard pipeline, Transco ref. 1038 operated by National Grid Gas, for which you forwarded a revised pipeline specification and grid references as supplied by National Grid Gas. My colleague Mr D Hill then provided you with an assessment report including a site plan showing the revised HSE Consultation Distances (CD's) in relation to your proposed development site. Further to this work you requested HSE's pre-application advice on the proposed developments, as shown in drawing DWG: 019-01Sheet supplied, in light of this reassessment.

Science Directorate

██████████ ██████████  
Land Use Planning  
HSE  
Harpur Hill  
Buxton  
Derbyshire  
SK17 9JN

Tel: ██████████ ██████████

██

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/>

Head of Team

██████████ ██████████

### **HSE pre-application advice based on the enhanced pipeline specification.**

3. Drawing DWG: 019-01Sheet shows that the proposed development is for housing. The proposed scale of development results in this being defined as a sensitivity level 3 development. HSE's reassessment of the enhanced section of the pipeline shows that in the vicinity of the proposed development site the HSE inner and middle consultation distances are both reduced to 3m either side of the pipeline centreline. Drawing DWG: 019-01Sheet shows this area of pipeline routing unpopulated with housing and used as a public footpath. The plan appears to show that the housing is situated in the outer HSE consultation zone, and as such HSE would not advise against this type of development in this location. HSE would not advise against the positioning of the footpath within the inner or middle consultation distance.
4. Based on the revised consultation zones, which, result from the reassessment of the thick-walled pipeline, as specified in our associated pipeline reassessment, and the location of the pipeline and corresponding housing development; **HSE would not advise, on safety grounds, against the granting of planning permission for the proposed development.**
5. This advice is based on the information which you have provided about this pre-planning application and HSE's existing policy for providing land-use planning advice, and is the response which HSE would provide should the development proposal be submitted for formal consultation in its present form. However, HSE's advice in response to a subsequent application may differ should HSE's policy, or the development details have changed by the time the application is submitted.
6. HSE has provided planning authorities with access to the HSE Planning Advice Web App, an online software decision support tool, to consult HSE on planning applications. However, in this case, because the proposal lies in the vicinity of a major accident hazard pipeline for which the pipeline has been thick-walled in sections, Warrington Borough Council should consult HSE directly for advice as the HSE Planning Advice Web App cannot currently take into account any modifications which have been made, to a pipeline since its original notification.

Yours sincerely

██████████ ██████████

**Land Use Planning Advice Team**

**Science Directorate**

Enc.

Drawing DWG: 019-01Sheet



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**MASTERPLAN**  
LAND SOUTH OF WARRINGTON ROAD, CULCHETH

Representation for Story Homes



<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

# 'Call for Sites'

## Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

### Call for Sites Registration Form

October 2016

**Please note this 'Call for Sites' is for five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500sqm of floor space) and above, Gypsy, Traveller and Show People and Minerals and Waste sites.**

The identification of sites does not imply that the Council considers that the site is suitable for development, either now or in the future. It cannot be taken as representing either an intention to allocate these sites, or as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Potential sites that have been identified will be further tested through the Plan-making process, including through the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, several stages of public participation and independent examination.

Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)



## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

	Your details	Your Agent's details
Name	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Position	[REDACTED]	
Organisation	[REDACTED]	
Address	[REDACTED]	
	Town	[REDACTED]
	Postcode	[REDACTED]
Telephone	[REDACTED]	
Email address	[REDACTED]	

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a separate form.

Name of site /other names it's known by	Land at Warrington Road, Culcheth	
Address	Land at Warrington Road	
	[REDACTED]	
	Town	Culcheth
	Postcode	WA3 5AE
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	Easting : 2°30'23.4"	Northing : 53°27'14.8"
Site area (hectares)	12.85ha / 31.75 acres - (Parcel 1: 8.4ha / Parcel 2: 4.45ha)	
Net developable area (hectares)	10ha / 24.71 acres	
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)	Owner <input type="checkbox"/>	Lessee <input type="checkbox"/>
	Prospective Purchaser <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please state: Option to buy

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.

**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses: 300	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)						
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	Approximately 30 Dwellings per Hectare					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

<b>(4) Site Ownership</b>				
Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.				
If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.				
	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3	
Name				
Address				
		Town		
		Postcode		
<u>Or</u> : I do not know who owns the site				
Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment? Please also record these details for the 4 <sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).				
Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?	No			

<b>(5) Market Interest</b>		
Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:		
		<i>Any comments</i>
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Site is under option to Story Homes
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p>The site is under option to Story Homes, a family owned five star house builder based in the North West of England. Story Homes have multiple developments across the North of England and Southern Scotland, with an emphasis on high quality family homes that respond sensitively to local character and are set within attractive landscaped areas of open space.</p> <p>Subject to policy change Story Homes will bring this site forward for development.</p>		

**(6) Site Condition**

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)		Agricultural
Neighbouring Uses		North; Residential and Agricultural, East; Agricultural, South; Recreational, West; Educational (School)
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	0	%	Proportion not covered by buildings	100	%
---------------------------------	---	---	-------------------------------------	-----	---

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?		buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use:	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant:	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?		

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?	100	%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?	100	% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?	0	% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)	0	% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Mains sewerage	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Drainage, flood risk	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Tree Preservation Orders	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Electricity supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Gas supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Telecommunications	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **(8) Site Availability**

*Please indicate when the site may be available*

Excluding planning policy constraints, when do you believe this site could be available for development?

Immediately Yes (Note: to be “immediately available”, a site must be cleared, unless being considered for conversions.)

If not immediately, please state when it could be available:

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

## **(9) Any Other Information**

Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary.

Please refer to Story Homes (WYG) Representations submitted and Preferred Development Options consultation in addition to the Supplementary Vision Document.

This site will contribute to market housing, affordable housing and public open space, in addition to investment in the local community facilities.

**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

01925 442841

This form is available in other formats or languages on request.

<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

# 'Call for Sites'

## Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

### Call for Sites Registration Form

October 2016

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The identification of sites does not imply that the Council considers that the site is suitable for development, either now or in the future. It cannot be taken as representing either an intention to allocate these sites, or as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Potential sites that have been identified will be further tested through the Plan-making process, including through the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, several stages of public participation and independent examination.

Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)



## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

		Your details	Your Agent's details
Name		[REDACTED]	
Position		[REDACTED]	
Organisation		[REDACTED]	
Address		[REDACTED]	
		[REDACTED]	
		[REDACTED]	
	Town	[REDACTED]	
	Postcode	[REDACTED]	
Telephone		[REDACTED]	
Email address		[REDACTED]	

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a **separate** form.

Name of site /other names it's known by		Land at Warrington Road, Culcheth	
Address		Land at Warrington Road	
	Town	Culcheth	
	Postcode	WA3 5AE	
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference		Easting : 366339	Northing : 395303
Site area (hectares)		11.53ha / 28.49 acres - (Parcel 1: 7.08ha / Parcel 2: 4.45ha)	
Net developable area (hectares)		10ha / 24.71	
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)		Owner <input type="checkbox"/>	Lessee <input type="checkbox"/>
		Prospective Purchaser <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/>
		Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please state: Option to buy

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.

**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses: 300	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)						
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	Approximately 30 Dwellings per Hectare					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3	
Name	[REDACTED]			
Address				
		Town		
		Postcode		

Or: I do not know who owns the site

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?  
Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?

No

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

		Any comments
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Site is under option to Story Homes
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The site is under option to Story Homes, a family owned five star house builder based in the North West of England. Story Homes have multiple developments across the North of England with an emphasis on high quality family homes that respond sensitively to local character and are set within attractive landscaped areas of open space.

Both parcel 1 and parcel 2 are available, suitable and deliverable. The two parcels are submitted together but may also be considered as separate parcels for the SHLAA exercise and Local Plan consultation. Subject to policy change Story Homes will bring these sites forward for development as soon as possible upon Green Belt release.

## (6) Site Condition

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)	Agricultural	
Neighbouring Uses	North; Residential and Agricultural, East; Agricultural, South; Recreational, West; Educational (School)	
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	0	%	Proportion not covered by buildings	100	%
---------------------------------	---	---	-------------------------------------	-----	---

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?		buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use:	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant:	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?		

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?	100	%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?	100	% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?	0	% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)	0	% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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i) Telecommunications	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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If not immediately, please state when it could be available:

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

## **(9) Any Other Information**

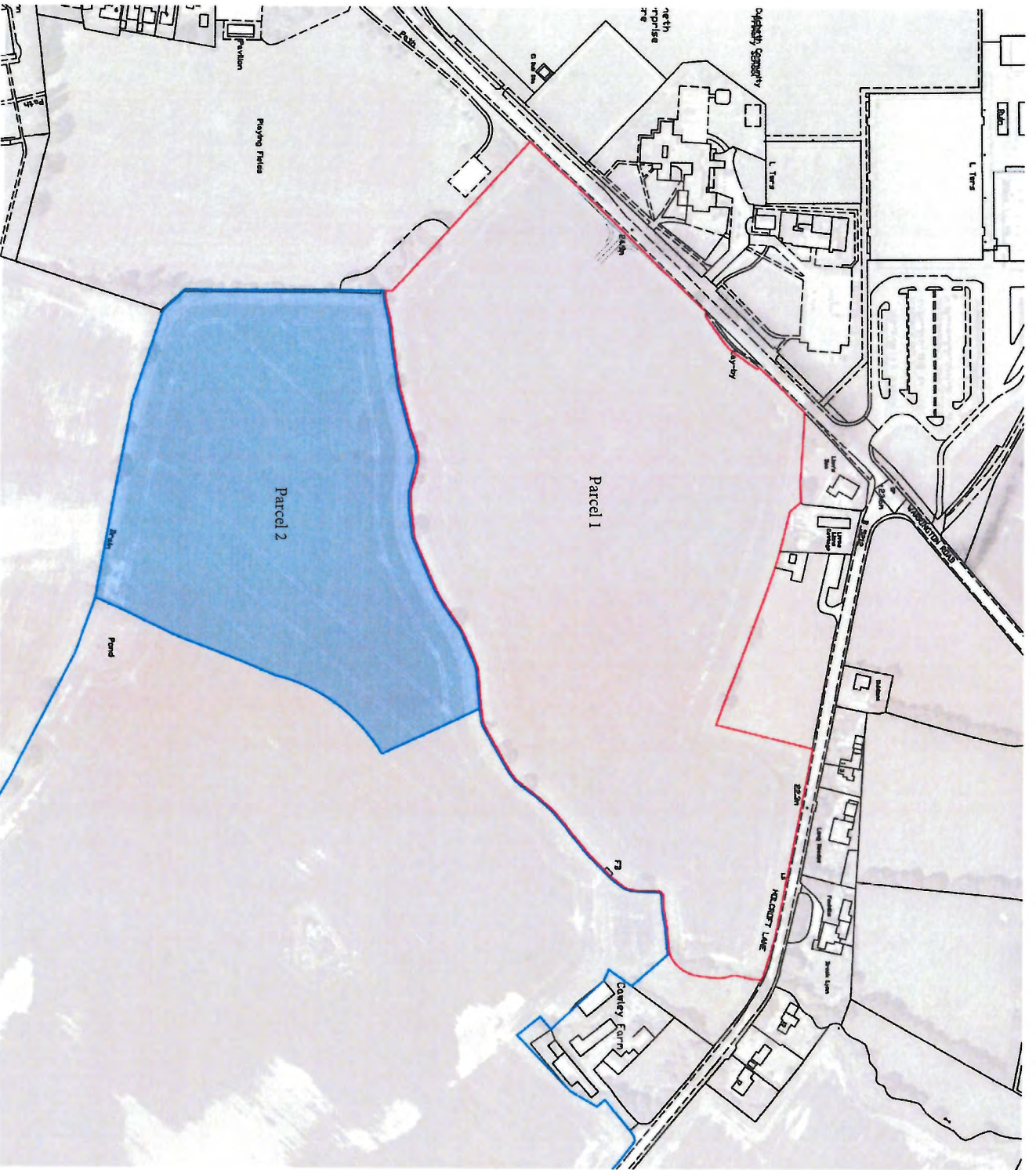
Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary.

Please refer to Story Homes (WYG) Representations submitted to the Preferred Development Options consultation in addition to the Supplementary Vision Document. Site capacity is approximately 300 units and will provide market, affordable homes and public open space, in addition investment in local community facilities. Story Homes are committed to the delivery of the site as soon as practicably possible upon Green Belt release. Retained land to the south and east has also been submitted for consideration. (Please see attached Location Plan)

**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

**[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)  
01925 442841**

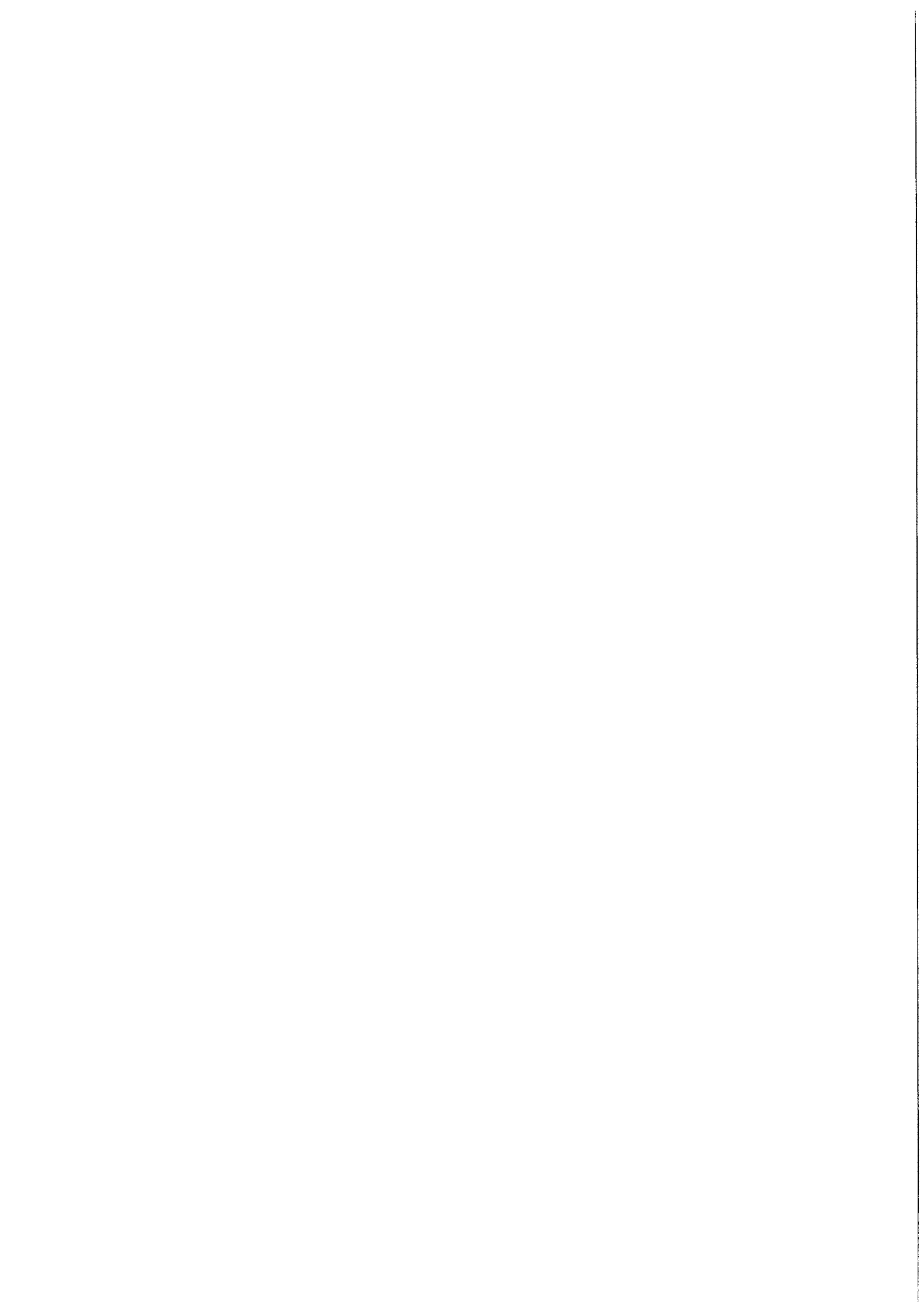
This form is available in other formats or languages on request.



at  
**Land at Warrington Road,  
 Culcheth**

**Location Plan**

DRAWN BY	DATE	SHEET
CHECKED BY	SCALE	NBS / A3
NO. OF	ISSUANCE NO. 01	REVISION
REVISION		





<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

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Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

	Your details	Your Agent's details
Name		
Position		
Organisation		
Address		
	Town	
	Postcode	
Telephone		
Email address		

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a **separate** form.

Name of site /other names it's known by	Land east & west of Holcroft Lane, Culcheth (Retained Land)	
Address	Land east and west of Holcroft Lane	
	Town	Culcheth
	Postcode	WA3 5AF
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	Easting : 366977	Northing : 395291
Site area (hectares)	38.84ha / 96 acres	
Net developable area (hectares)	tbc - subject to use/policy etc	
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)	Owner <input type="checkbox"/>	Lessee <input type="checkbox"/>
	Prospective Purchaser <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Please state:

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.

**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses:	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)						
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	Approximately 30 Dwellings per Hectare					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3	
Name	[REDACTED]			
Address				
		Town		
		Postcode		

Or: I do not know who owns the site

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?  
Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?	No
---	----

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any comments
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Site is under option to Story Homes
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The Site is submitted on the basis that additional development needs may be required in Culcheth. This area of retained land is submitted alongside Land at Warrington Road (previously submitted for 220-300 dwellings).

The site is retained land under option to Story Homes, a family owned five star house builder based in the North West of England. The site is available, suitable and deliverable subject to policy change.

**(6) Site Condition**

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)		Agricultural
Neighbouring Uses		North; Agricultural/Residential, East; Residential, South; Agricultural, West; Residential
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	0 %	Proportion not covered by buildings	100 %
---------------------------------	-----	-------------------------------------	-------

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?		buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use:	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant:	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?		

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?	100	%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?	100	% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?	0	% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)	0	% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Mains sewerage	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Drainage, flood risk	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Tree Preservation Orders	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Electricity supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Gas supply	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Telecommunications	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	No			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **(8) Site Availability**

*Please indicate when the site may be available*

Excluding planning policy constraints, when do you believe this site could be available for development?

Immediately Yes (Note: to be "immediately available", a site must be cleared, unless being considered for conversions.)

If not immediately, please state when it could be available:

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

## **(9) Any Other Information**

Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary.

Please refer to Story Homes (WYG) Representations submitted to the Preferred Development Options consultation in addition to the Supplementary Vision Document. Please note that this is a submission for retained land within the same ownership to the south and east of previously submitted parcel adjacent to Warrington Road. Retained land site capacity is not tested but expected to deliver at rate of 30dph. Site is submitted for Councils consideration as available for a range of uses in addition to residential as deemed appropriate. (Location plan attached).

**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)  
**01925 442841**

This form is available in other formats or languages on request.





**Story**  
HOMES

SITE  
Culcheth, East & West Of  
Holcroft Lane

Retained Land

DRAWN BY	ASC	DATE	SEP/17
CHECKED BY		SCALE	NIS 6:10
ISSUE	DRAWING NUMBER		REVISION
REVISIONS			



# WARRINGTON ROAD, CULCHETH

VISION DOCUMENT, SEPTEMBER 2017







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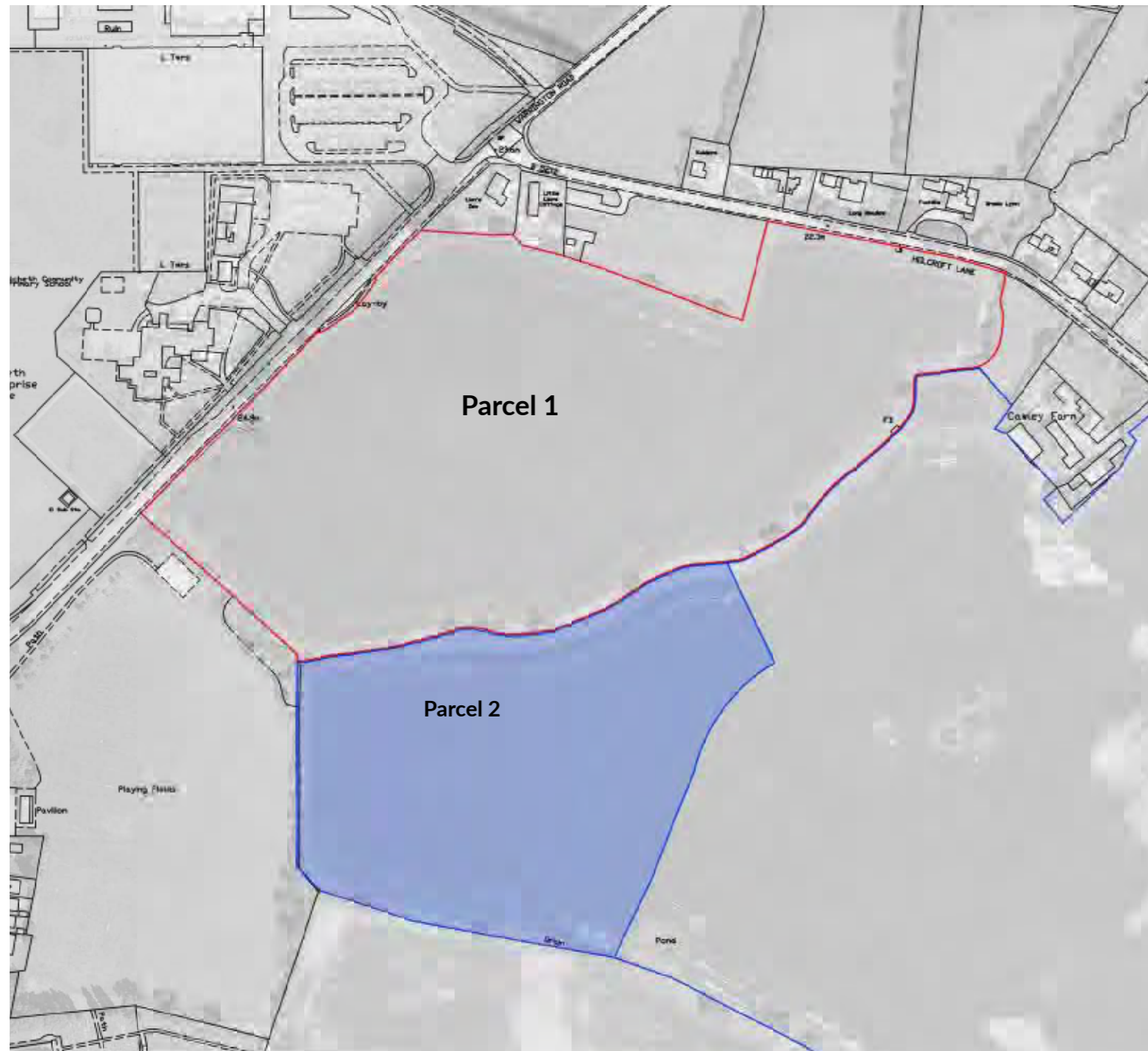
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# 01 INTRODUCTION



The Site is shown within the red line above (Parcel 1). The land edged in blue (Parcel 2) is in the same ownership and could also be included in order to meet all of Culcheth's housing needs on one site.

This Vision Document has been prepared by Story Homes North West to set out the vision for a new sustainable extension to Culcheth, in Warrington. It sets out the case for releasing land at Warrington Road ('the Site') from the Green Belt and allocating it for housing, as part of Warrington Borough Council's Local Plan Review. It demonstrates that this can provide a sustainable solution to help Warrington Borough Council meet its future housing growth requirements.

To ensure the appropriate development of the Site, Story Homes has instructed a development team with a proven track record in delivering successful schemes. This includes WYG (Planning, Landscape and Visual Impact) Woodcroft (Design) and Croft Transport Solutions (Highways).

This document has taken account of key technical considerations including accessibility, landscape and visual impact to inform the preparation of a Concept Masterplan that demonstrates the suitability of the Site for residential development.

At the outset, it is highlighted that the Site:

- Is in a highly sustainable location in close proximity to the existing services and facilities within the village centre
- Will result in a relatively minimal harm to the key purposes of the Green Belt; and
- Provides an opportunity to create a high quality development which is sympathetic and responsive to the existing settlement character of Culcheth

This document is submitted to the Council alongside the representations to the Warrington Local Plan Preferred Option consultation (September 2017) produced by WYG, and builds on the earlier Scoping stage consultation. Both of these representations should be read in conjunction with this Vision Document.

# INTRODUCTION TO STORY HOMES



Story Homes is a privately owned housebuilder, founded by Fred Story in 1987. It has a long and successful reputation of building quality and high specification homes across the North of England and South of Scotland. The family owned business has grown in size and status over the years but remains grounded, built on its original ethos of 'doing the right thing' and creating a brand synonymous with quality.

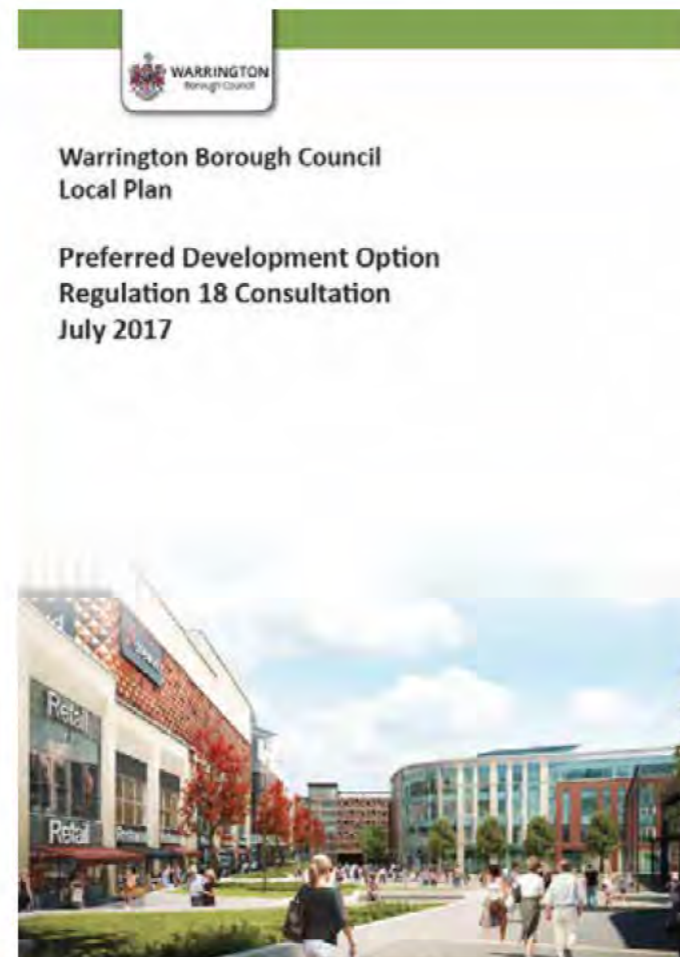
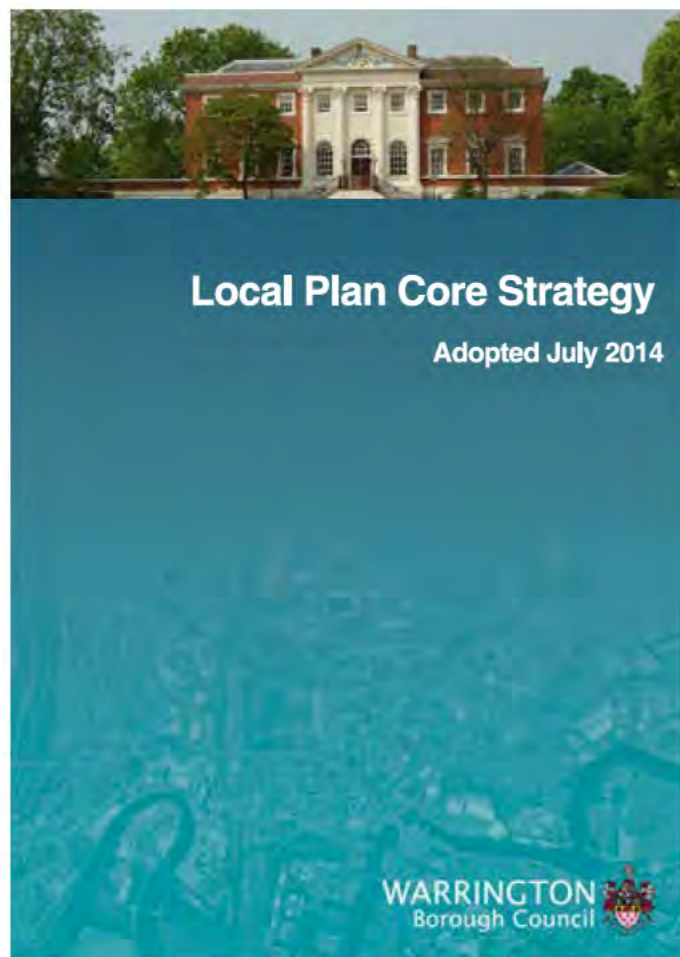
For nearly 30 years Story Homes has been the name most often associated with aspirational homes for sale throughout Cumbria, the North East and Lancashire. A passion for quality and excellence has seen Story Homes become a multi-award winning UK property developer; with modern and attractive homes instantly inspiring buyers. Story Homes have been awarded the top '5 star' rating in the house building industry's annual customer satisfaction survey for the 4th year running since becoming eligible for 4 years ago.

Story Homes' success is underpinned by a determination to understand the needs of communities where we build and a goal to deliver design quality and high quality building specifications that enhance locations. Story Homes' presence in the North West is growing significantly and has recently been awarded 3 UK Property awards for Brookwood Park in Kirkham, The Woodlands in Shotley Bridge and Pentland Reach in Biggar.

The Story Difference – comprising a commitment to design quality, place-making and customer experience – will be instrumental in delivering an exemplary new development which Culcheth can be proud of.

# 02 THE PLANNING CONTEXT

## THE EMERGING WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW



Given the results of the High Court challenge and the emerging evidence underpinning the Borough's growth needs and economic development ambitions, the Council recognised the need to undertake a review of the Local Plan.

Local Plan Scoping stage consultation was undertaken in November 2016. The Council then published their Preferred Development Option for consultation in July 2017. This sets out the current housing and employment land requirement for the Borough and the preferred option strategy for meeting these needs.

To underpin the Local Plan review, the Council commenced the preparation of the Borough's housing and economic needs to the year 2037. The most up to date study assessing the housing objectively assessed need (OAN) for the Borough identified a need of 955 new homes per year to 2037.

The Council has also assessed the number of additional jobs that will be created through the Council's growth aspirations set out in the 'Warrington Means Business' economic development programme as well as the Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan and future growth ambitions. These growth aspirations will deliver 31,000 new jobs in Warrington up to 2040 which is approximately 30% above the baseline forecasts and there is a need to ensure a balance between the number of homes and jobs.

There is also a need to provide an additional 5% buffer to allow for flexibility (as directed by the National Planning Policy Framework) and to make up for an existing backlog of 847 homes. All of this means that it will now be necessary to increase the minimum supply of homes to around **1,200 per annum**. The Council are also seeking to identify 'safeguarded land' to meet further needs in the ten years beyond the Plan period.

The most recent Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), published in January 2016 has identified that Warrington's housing needs cannot be met on brownfield land, existing commitments and on greenfield sites outside of the Green Belt.

If Warrington is to meet its development needs, then based on the Preferred Development Option, sufficient Green Belt land will need to be released to deliver approximately 9,000 new homes and 213 hectares of employment land over the next 20 years [from Preferred Development Option, WBC, July 2017].

Warrington Borough Council adopted its Local Plan Core Strategy in July 2014. This set out a need to build 500 new homes every year up to 2027. This requirement is now out of date.

Following the adoption of the Core Strategy, a High Court Challenge subsequently quashed the specific parts of the Plan relating to:

- The housing target of 10,500 new homes (equating to 500 per year) between 2006 and 2027 and;
- References to 1,100 new homes at the Omega Strategic Proposal

# WARRINGTON PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT OPTION

The Council have sought to deliver as much housing as possible within the urban area. They commissioned an Urban Capacity Study which estimated that 15,429 homes could be delivered on existing urban sites, a figure which we feel is unrealistically high and is open to challenge. However, the Council nevertheless maintain that they will need to release sufficient Green Belt land to deliver 8,791 homes (see Table 1).

The Preferred Development Option is Option 2. This is for the majority of Green Belt release to be adjacent to the main urban area in Warrington, with incremental growth in the outlying settlements. This includes a Garden City Suburb of approximately 6,000 new homes to the south-east of Warrington and an urban extension in South-West Warrington of around 2,000 homes.

The outlying settlements have been identified as having an indicative capacity for 1,190 new homes on land to be released from the Green Belt, of which 300 would be in Culcheth (see Table 22). The Green Belt Assessment has assessed all suitable sites immediately adjacent to the existing built-up area of Culcheth and it assessed the Site as making a 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt, meaning that it is one of the most favourable Green Belt sites in Culcheth for development. It will therefore be necessary to release land that makes a 'moderate' contribution to the Green Belt in Culcheth. This corresponds with the 'incremental growth' option assessed in WBC's Settlement Profile for Culcheth, which concludes that this level of growth is likely to be supported by existing and enhanced infrastructure.

This represents very clear "exceptional circumstances" to justify the release of land from the Green Belt. The Site at Warrington Road in Culcheth has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the social and economic success of the Borough.

	955 p.a.	1,113 p.a.	1,332 p.a.
Housing Target 2017 to 2037	19,100	22,260	26,640
Flexibility at 5%	955	1,113	1,332
Backlog (from 2015 against OAN)	847	847	847
Total Requirement	20,902	24,220	28,819
Total Capacity within urban area	15,429	15,429	15,429
Green Belt requirement	5,473	8,791	13,390

Table 1: Housing Land Requirements

Settlement	Indicative Green Belt Capacity
Lymm	500
Culcheth	300
Burtonwood	150
Winwick	90
Croft	60
Glazebury	50
Hollins Green	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,190</b>

Table 22: Outlying Settlements - Indicative Green Belt Capacity

Tables extracted from Preferred Development Option, WBC, July 2017



# 03 THE SITE

## LOCATION AND OWNERSHIP

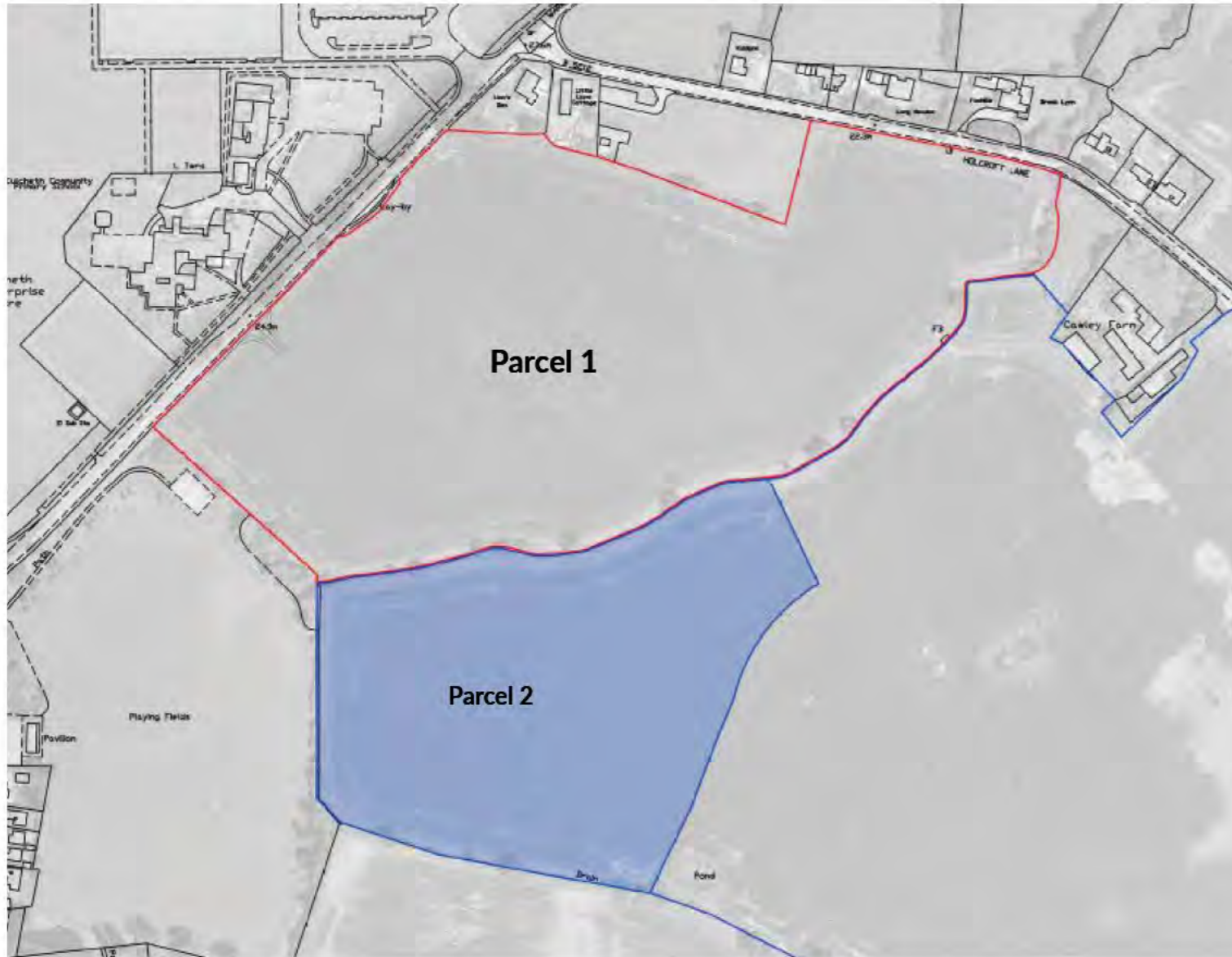


Figure 1 - Site Boundary

The Site is within a single ownership and is represented by a property agent. Story Homes have an agreement with the landowner to bring the Site forward for residential development (subject to its release from Green Belt). There are no legal or ownership constraints to its delivery for housing.

Story Homes are committed to bringing this site forward for housing and will progress a scheme as soon as the Site is allocated.

### Site Location

The Site is located on the eastern edge of the Culcheth village and is currently used as arable farmland. The Site is an irregular shape with its north-western boundary aligned with the Warrington Road / A574. Beyond Warrington Road to the west is the education complex made up of Culcheth Community Primary School, Culcheth High School and Culcheth Community Campus. The residential area of Culcheth village is situated beyond this to the west. Holcroft Lane runs along a section of the northern boundary which has scattered dwellings located along it on the northern side of the road opposite the Site. At the junction of Holcroft Lane and Warrington Road adjoining the Site's northern boundary is the Little Lions Cattery. The south-eastern boundary of Parcel 1 is made of a ditch that passes north east to south west. A rural landscape of small to medium sized arable fields interspersed with residential areas is located to the north, east and south of the Site.

### Parcel 1 & 2

Please refer to Figure 1 to identify the site location, we refer to the Site as 'Parcel 1' which measures approximately 7.08 ha (17.5 acres) We consider the land at Warrington Road in Culcheth to be a sustainable site which can make a significant positive contribution to helping meet Warrington's housing need. The representation is being made therefore to support the growth of Culcheth as a larger outlying settlement of Warrington with the delivery of new housing to meet its needs, and with the retention of Green Belt land where appropriate. We consider the land at Warrington Road to be the most suitable and sustainable site for Culcheth to meet its housing needs. We therefore propose the release of this site from the Green Belt and its allocation for housing. Story Homes would also like to submit additional land referred to as 'Parcel 2' and within the same ownership to the Council as available, suitable and deliverable.

The combined parcel's extending to a total of 11.53ha (28.49 acres) provide the opportunity for the entirety of Culcheth's housing needs to be met in one location maximising community benefits that can be delivered as part of a wider scheme.

Figure 1 therefore shows the principal Site (referred to as 'Parcel 1) as the land edged red. The additional land, 'Parcel 2' is shown edged blue and measures approximately 4.45 ha (11 acres).

It is worth noting that this representation deals principally with the Site edged red in Figure 1 referred to as 'Parcel 1'. We do however discuss the merits of the potential inclusion of 'Parcel 2' for the Council to consider but we ask that the Council consider the sites independently for the purpose of this response.

# 04 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

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Warrington Borough Council have undertaken a Green Belt Assessment. The Site at Warrington Road in Culcheth represents the majority of parcel CH9, which is assessed overall as making a 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt. We agree with this analysis. Culcheth has 15 land parcels within the assessment: three of these (including CH9) are rated as making a 'weak' contribution; with the remaining twelve all rated as making a 'strong' contribution. This therefore means that the Site is amongst the most favourable for development in terms of assessing impacts on the Green Belt, we consider later in this document why this is.

The Site sits to the immediate east of the existing village in a triangle of land between Warrington Road and Holcroft Lane. A watercourse forms the south-eastern boundary of Parcel 1. There are mature trees and hedgerows along most of the Warrington Road frontage and a mature tree belt lies alongside the watercourse. This development would therefore represent a small but well screened extension to the village on its eastern edge. Impact on the openness of the surrounding Green Belt and on surrounding landscape character but be limited by the defensible edges of the Site.

The other sites put forward in the Call for Sites exercise generally represent larger scale incursions into the surrounding countryside and would have greater impact on the surrounding landscape character and Green Belt. This includes the large expanse of land to the north-east of the village (R18/128) which would represent an approximately 50% expansion in the size of the built-up area and lacks defensible boundaries. Other sites are completely divorced from the built-up area. This is reflected in the Green Belt Assessment, which assesses all of these other sites as being in land that makes a 'strong contribution' to the Green Belt. The only exception is site R19/041, to the south-west of the village.

The subject land at Warrington Road is therefore the best option in terms of impact on the surrounding landscape and the only option for the growth of Culcheth without requiring land that makes a strong contribution to the Green Belt.



# 05 SUSTAINABILITY

We have undertaken analysis of the location of key community facilities in Culcheth and their accessibility from the subject Site (see the Facilities Plan).

This analysis shows that the Site is very well located with most key facilities lying within easy walking distance. Culcheth is a sustainable centre with a wide range of facilities, including a high school, GP surgery, leisure centre and food store. This makes the Site sustainable; there will be not be a reliance on the private car and most journeys can be made on foot.

The Site is especially well sited in relation to education needs, with both the high school and primary school lying on the opposite side of Warrington Road, within a five minute walk. Both of these schools also serve as wider community hubs – with a day nursery and children’s dentist being located alongside the primary school; and the leisure centre alongside the high school.

The Site is also well served by buses: the no.19 service runs along Warrington Road, with buses every 30 minutes to Warrington. There is a bus stop on the northern boundary and several bus stops within 5 minutes’ walk of the Site. Taylor Business Park offers a significant number of jobs, lying a short distance to the south of Culcheth, and is accessible by cycle or buses via Warrington Road.



Service	Route	Daytime	Evening	Sat	Sun
19	Leigh - Warrington	2	1	1	1
28	Leigh - Warrington	1	1	1	0
28A	Leigh - Warrington	5 per day	0	0	1
193	Birchwood - Glazebury	1	1	0	0

**Table 1 – Summary of Bus Services Operating Past The Site**



















Site R18/041 is similarly accessible to the village centre but is much further from the high school and from the regular bus service on Warrington Road. Significantly, this Site lies to the rear of existing houses on residential streets; it lacks the strong vehicle and pedestrian connections with the existing settlement that the subject Site offers.

The Site compares favourably against other potential sites from the Call for Sites exercise in terms of sustainability. No other parcel of land put forward can compete with the Site in terms of accessibility to both the village centre and the services hub around the two schools.

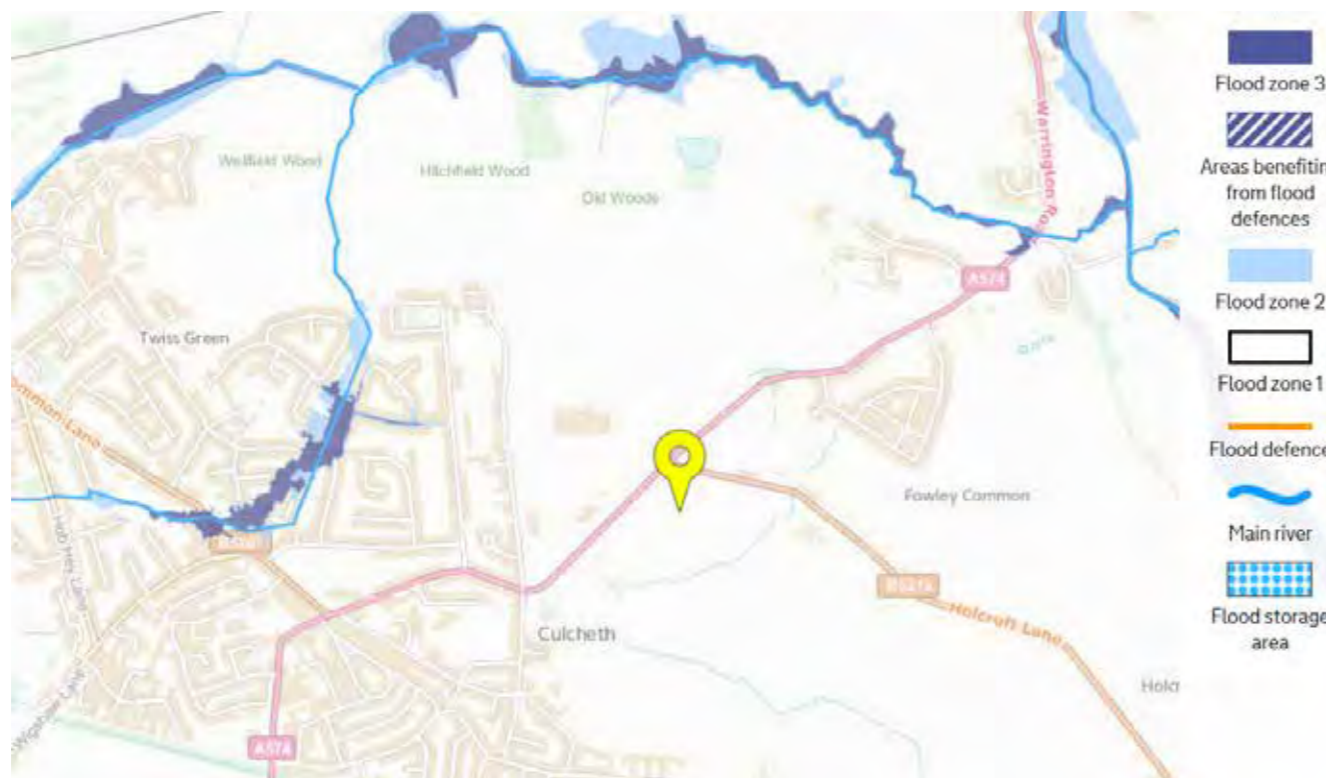


# FACILITIES PLAN



-  Site boundary
-  Culcheth Village Centre
-  Bus stop
-  Bus route
-  Food store
-  High school
-  Primary school
-  Nursery
-  GP
-  Pharmacy
-  Dentist
-  Post office
-  Library
-  Public house
-  Church
-  Sports facilities
-  400m (5 minute walk)
-  800m (10 minute walk)

# 06 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



EA Flood Map for Culcheth Source: Environment Agency – downloaded 25/09/2017

The Site is not subject to or near to any restrictive environmental designations. There are no technical or environmental constraints which present an obstacle to development.

## Consultation Distances

Story Homes have engaged with National Grid and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as part of their technical due diligence investigations. Although the Site sits within consultation distances for the National High Pressure Gas Pipeline that runs in a south to north-east direction across the Site, our investigations have demonstrated that the Council's policy map has not been updated to take account of upgrades to the pipeline's specification in recent years.

National Grid, the pipeline operator, has informed Story Homes that the pipeline has been heavy brick walled reducing the risks of the accident hazard pipeline. Story Homes have taken this information to the HSE and have had the pipeline specification re-modelled to understand how heavy brick walling reduces the size of the required consultation distances. It has been demonstrated that this reduces the inner and middle consultation distances to 3 metres either side of the pipeline and that the outer consultation distance is now within 310 metres. Further to the reassessment, Story Homes have prepared the illustrative masterplan which shows the inner/middle consultation zones unpopulated with housing and used as a public footpath. The plan shows that the housing is situated in the outer HSE consultation zone and in accordance with the HSE 'Land use and planning methodology' the proposed development is defined as sensitivity level 3. HSE have prepared a bespoke letter to Story Homes which concludes: "HSE would not advise, on safety grounds against the granting of planning permission for the proposed development".

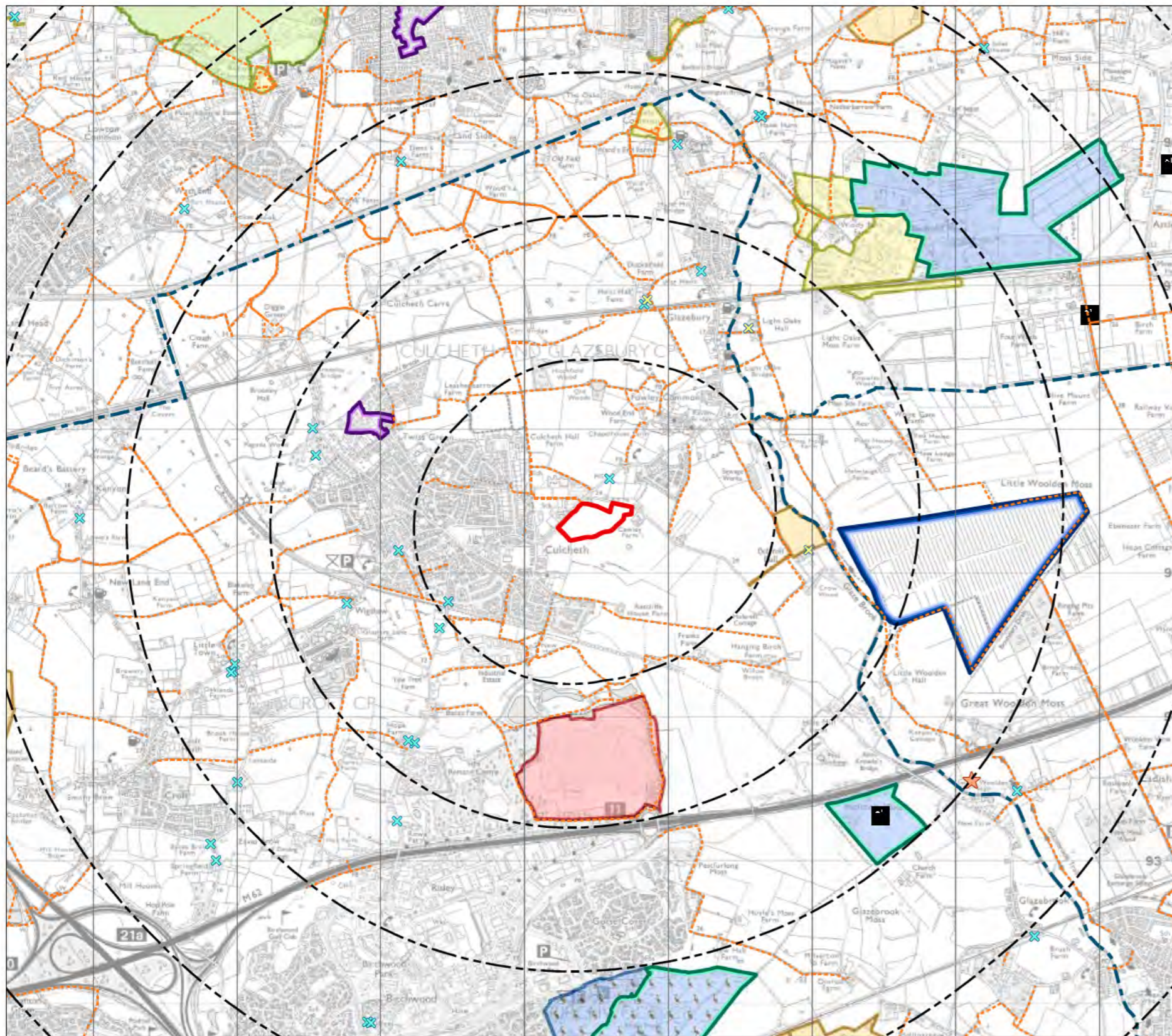
## Flooding and Drainage

















The entirety of the Site is located within flood zone 1 of the Environment Agency's Indicative Flood Map which means that it is considered to have a low risk of flooding. Initial investigations have indicated that Site drainage can be achieved via an appropriately designed Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS).

## Ecology and Trees

The Site is not recognised for its biodiversity value. It is not subject to any ecological designations, such as SSSI's, SBI's or Local Nature Reserves, and there are no such designations nearby. At planning application stage, detailed surveys of the flora and fauna will be undertaken to ensure that there will be no harm to any high value species. There are opportunities to improve biodiversity at the Site through the provision of enhanced habitats, including new green space. Given that the Site is currently used for agriculture, it contains very few trees. All existing high value trees and hedgerows will be retained wherever possible alongside significant new tree planting, to enhance the character of the new development. Overall there will be an increase in the number of trees at the Site.

# LOCAL LANDSCAPE



-  Preliminary Site Boundary
-  1km buffers from site boundary
-  Unitary Authority boundaries
- Landscape Designations :**
-  Country Parks
-  Authorised Landfill Sites
-  Authorised Landfill Sites  
(Current status and usage to be confirmed)
- Public Access :**
-  Public Footpaths
-  Public Bridleways
-  CROW Access Land exc Section 15
- Heritage Designations :**
-  Conservation Areas
-  Scheduled Monuments
- Listed Buildings
-  Grade II\*
-  Grade II
- Biodiversity Designations :**
-  Special Areas of Conservation
-  Sites of Special Scientific Interest
-  Local Nature Reserves
-  'Cadishead and Little Woollen Moss'  
Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve
-  Wildlife Trust Reserve





**Key**

- Extent of site boundary (Parcel 1)
- Additional land in same ownership
- Parcel 2
- ➔ Primary Access
- ➔ Secondary Access
- Sewer easement
- Combined sewer
- Land to be re-profiled
- Watercourse easement
- High pressure gas main
- 3m inner zone and 3m middle zone
- 310m outer consultation zone
- Water course
- Sensitive boundary
- Existing landscaping



## Constraints & Opportunities

### Warrington Road, Culcheth

Drawing Number: WD17-19-MP02.B  
 Scale: 1:2000  
 Date: August 2017  
 Sheet Size: A2



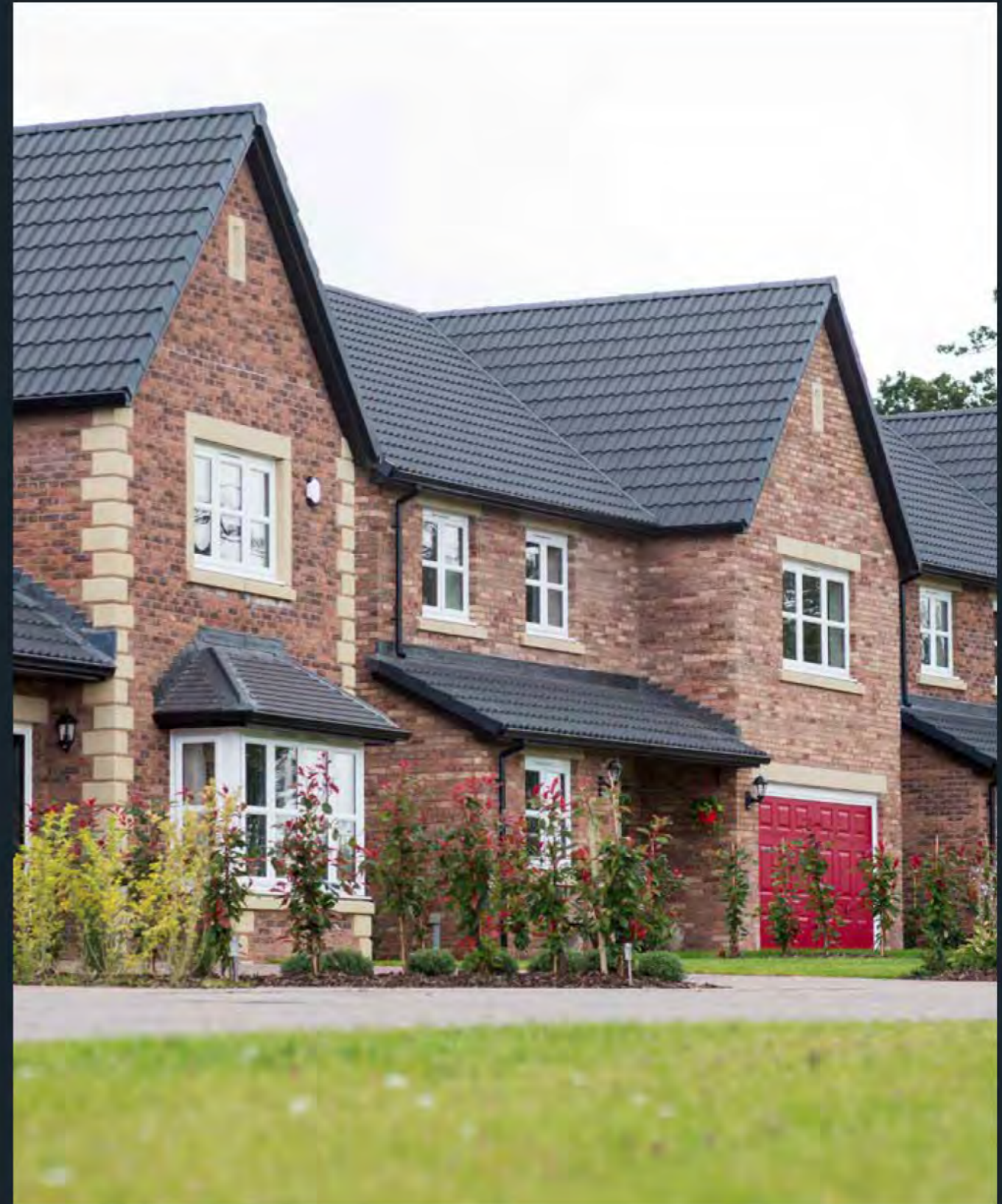




# 07 THE MASTERPLAN

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Story Homes have prepared a Concept Masterplan for the Site. This responds to the identified opportunities and constraints and shows how the proposed number of houses will be accommodated. The masterplan gives an indication of the look and feel of the proposed development. Two variations of the Concept Masterplan have been prepared for the Site: the first covers Parcel 1 only and the second covers Parcels 1 and 2. The key features of both are described on the following pages.



# MASTERPLAN PARCEL 1



DWG: 019-01

SHEET SIZE: A0

SCALE: 1:1000

# MASTERPLAN PRINCIPLES

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- 1** The layout has been designed so that a unique sense of arrival is created immediately upon arriving at the development. Houses will face outwards towards Warrington Road set back behind attractively landscaped green spaces. A vista towards the arrival green has been created providing a welcoming and inviting environment.
- 2** A well connected Arrival Green and nodal area, distinct in character it will help visitors navigate further into the development. This area will be framed by feature dwellings facing onto this important area.
- 3** Courtyard serving higher density plots. Landscaping will soften edges and help delineate public and private realm.
- 4** Small cul-de-sac serves a crescent of houses.
- 5** Central green space creates a distinct and attractive space centrally within the development. It will be highly accessible with good pedestrian and cycle connectivity. It will provide panoramic views into the southern part of the development. Houses will face out onto this important space responding positively with it. Existing high quality trees retained providing a mature landscape setting.
- 6** Houses will face onto the East-West linear green. Soft landscaped nodal area will highlight the junction running south. Existing high quality trees and hedges retained.
- 7** Linear landscaped areas along the southern boundary will provide a soft edge to this important area. Plot positions and orientations will be organic in form, they will face out taking advantage of the long distant views to the south. Lower density plots will respond positively with this rural edge. A new pedestrian route will provide pedestrian permeability connecting the development together. Existing trees and hedges will be retained and enhanced.
- 8** A series of nodal areas around the development will assist in navigation as well as providing attractive areas.
- 9** Landscaped green located at the head of this important route. This area will provide a nodal point helping navigate around the development.
- 10** Houses set back from Warrington Road facing out over a landscaped green wedge responding positively with this highly visible area.
- 11** Landscaped Green will provide an attractive space at the head of the street. It will also provide a buffer between the development and the existing properties to the north. A pedestrian link will connect the development with the wider footpath network around the development.
- 12** Small courtyard serving higher density plot.
- 13** Pedestrian link runs north to south through the development. This area utilises the Gas pipe line easement which runs through the Site.
- 14** Pedestrian route crosses the street. Change in carriage width, colour and texture will help calm vehicle speeds. Only one vehicular crossing over the gas pipe line is permitted, this street layout connects Warrington Road with Holcroft Lane whilst discouraging 'rat running' through the development.
- 15** Arrival green located at the entrance into the development from Holcroft Lane. This area will create a completely different environment from the arrival green serving the Warrington Road access. This will ensure a unique sense of arrival is created from both access points into the development.
- 16** Houses will face onto Holcroft Lane set back behind a landscaped green wedge. Hedge and tree planting will help assimilate the development into the street-scape.

# MASTERPLAN PARCELS 1 & 2

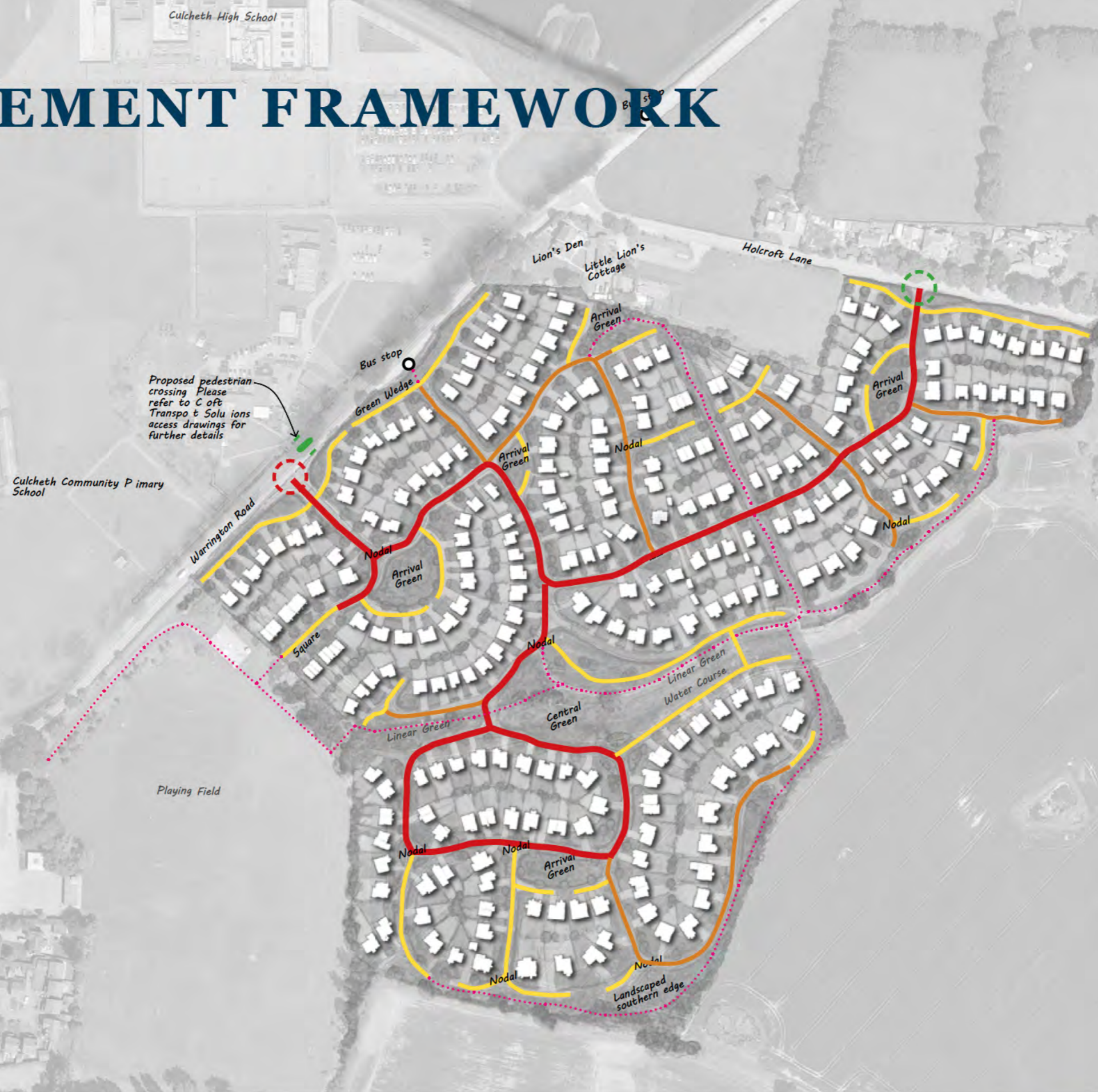


# MASTERPLAN PRINCIPLES

- 17 Shared surface street will serve homes overlooking the central green.
- 18 Amenity green will highlight two important junctions serving the most southern parts of the development. Homes will be carefully positioned and orientated around this important space. Soft landscaping will delineate the public and private realm as well as promote a rural setting to this part of the development.
- 19 Large detached houses generously spaced will provide a visually permeable edge to the most southern edge of the development. High quality landscaping and boundary treatments will create a soft edge to the development.
- 20 Enhanced landscaping to the southern edge will soften views into and out of the development.
- 21 Key nodal with possible views out of the development.
- 22 Generously spaced houses in large plots will face out of the development overlooking a multifunctional green space area. Enhanced landscaping will soft this edge of the development.



# MOVEMENT FRAMEWORK



Proposed pedestrian crossing. Please refer to Civil Transport Solutions access drawings for further details.

Key	
	Extent of site boundary
	Additional land in same ownership
	Primary Access
	Secondary Access
	Primary movement route
	Secondary movement route
	Tertiary movement route
	Pedestrian/cycle route
	Bus stop



**Movement Framework**  
Warrington Road, Culcheth



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### **Movement Framework**

A primary movement route runs centrally through the development. It connects Warrington Road with Holcroft Lane, however this route has been designed to deter 'rat running' through the development. This route will also allow direct access to individual properties.

A network of secondary and tertiary movement routes branch off the primary and provide vehicular and pedestrian access to individual properties. The secondary and tertiary streets will be designed as high quality shared surface streets to calm vehicle speeds and create a safe pedestrian environment.

A series of nodal areas and green spaces have been carefully positioned around the development. As well as provide attractive spaces, they will help visitors and occupants navigate around the development.

Active frontages along all of the routes ensures a safe and welcoming environment.

### **Pedestrian & Cycle permeability**

There are no existing Public Rights Of Way which cross the Site. The proposals include new pedestrian & cycle only routes, these will connect the green network areas and multi functional green spaces together. They will also connect the development with the wider footpath and cycle networks, encouraging walking, cycling and public transport.

### **Public transport**

There are two bus stops located within close proximity of the Site on Warrington Road. along the northern boundary. These serve bus routes running from and to Warrington Interchange, Leigh bus station and Taylor Business Park.

### **Parking Provision**

On site car and cycle parking will be provided in accordance with the relevant parking standards and guidance. Parking provision will be dealt with at the appropriate reserved matters application stage.







# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK



**Key**

- Extent of site boundary
- Movement routes
- Pedestrian/cycle movement route
- Existing landscape infrastructure
- Multi functional green space



**Green Infrastructure**  
Warrington Road, Culcheth

Drawing Number: WD17-19-MP04-B  
Scale: 1:2000  
Date: August 2017  
Sheet Size: A2



urban design | masterplanning | architecture



F - North-South corridor will form an important part of the green network connecting the southern green network areas with the north. This route will be dedicated to pedestrians and cyclists.

G - Central green space creates a distinct and attractive space centrally within the development. It will be highly accessible with good pedestrian and cycle connectivity. Houses will face out onto this important space responding positively with it.

H - Arrival green will act as an important nodal area highlighting two important junctions within the development serving the southern most parts of the development.

J - The landscaped southern edge will provide a soft edge to the development. Lower density houses will face out of the development along this edge.

K - East-West corridor located along the southern boundary. This space will be easily accessible and create an active travel route. It will provide a soft edge to the development.

L - Arrival green located near the Holcroft Lane entrance. The shape and layout of this green space differs from that of the arrival green near the Warrington Road entrance. This will give visitors a completely different experience depending which entrance into the development they use.

M - Holcroft Lane arrival green creates a welcoming environment soft edge to the development.



The Green Infrastructure includes new and existing established green spaces which will thread through and surround the development's built environment. These green spaces will be multi-functional and are positioned on main movement lines to ensure they are well overlooked, usable, accessible and safe. These important spaces will form an integral part of the development and its pedestrian / cycle networks. They will provide attractive and functional spaces, as well as create distinct nodal markers for movement within the development. The design and management of these spaces will provide ecological benefits and help assimilate the development's built environment into the landscape setting.

A - Warrington Road Arrival green located at the gateway into the development.

B - Green wedge will provide a soft edge to the development along Warrington Road.

C - Central Arrival Green, attractively landscaped formal open space area. This will act as an important nodal area within the development. It will create impact upon arrival when entering the Site from Warrington Road.

D - Arrival green located along the main movement route through the development highlighting an important junction.

E - Northern amenity green highlights the entrance into the North-South pedestrian/cycle corridor.

# VISION PRINCIPLES



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The Site (Parcel 1) can accommodate up to 220 high quality family homes comprising a range of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed homes. The proposed scheme will retain a consistent reference to the character of Culcheth and will embody the key principles of sustainability, promoting healthy lifestyles and a high quality of life through the enhancement of public rights of way and access to safe and multi-functional green spaces. The properties will be generously spaced and softened by a network of green infrastructure where open spaces will function individually, but will together add up to a comprehensive green environment which permeates throughout the development.

The layout has been designed so that a unique sense of arrival is created immediately upon arriving at the scheme. Houses will face outwards towards Warrington Road set back behind attractively landscaped green spaces. A vista towards the arrival green has been created providing a welcoming and inviting environment further connecting to nodal points within the scheme to frame and feature dwellings and assist with navigation.

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# 08 BENEFITS AND INFRASTRUCTURE



In order to justify the release of this Site from the Green Belt the Council must in their plan making demonstrate exceptional circumstances but also ensure that this would constitute sustainable development. The NPPF states that "sustainable development is about positive growth – making economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations.

"At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking."

The development of approximately 220-300 new homes on this Site in Culcheth will deliver significant and lasting economic, social and environment benefits to the local community.

## Social Benefits

As part of this development Story Homes will be providing the policy requirement of 30% affordable housing. The exact number of units will be determined through a detailed planning application and led by initial discussions with Warrington Council to determine the local need for social rented and discounted sale homes. This will have significant social benefits for the local community.

In addition to helping WBC meet the housing needs of the borough, the development of the Site will provide significant social, environmental and economic benefits to the local community. The presumption in favour of sustainable development within the NPPF includes social, environmental and economic sustainability.

The provision of new housing (and especially the affordable housing element) is a clear social benefit. The Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy identifies Culcheth as a neighbourhood centre (a 'larger village centre') in its Vision (p.72) and in Policy SN4. Objective 72 is to "maintain and enhance centres identified in the retail hierarchy throughout the borough as accessible, key locations for shops, services and community facilities".

The allocation of the Site for housing will play an important role in contributing to this objective and realising the vision. It will provide an increase to the local catchment population, which will help to support the shops and public services that exist in the village, with potential additional improvements funded through planning contributions. Furthermore, there will be additional economic benefits in terms of construction jobs and training, and additional tax revenues.

## Economic Benefits

The Home Builders Federation have produced a useful tool to estimate the value of these wider economic benefits (<http://www.hbf.co.uk/index.php?id=3197>). For 220 new homes (Parcel 1) this is estimated to:

- Support the employment of 946 people
- Provide 8 apprentices, graduates or trainees
- Generate £2,200,000 in tax revenue, including £282,920 in Council Tax revenue.
- New Homes Bonus – 220 new homes will result in a New Homes Bonus payment of £1.9m.

If the scheme were to include Parcel 2, there is the potential for the wider site to deliver 300 homes in this location Using the HBF tool this is estimated to:

- Support the employment of 1,290 people
- Provide 12 apprentices, graduates or trainees
- Generate £3,000,000 in tax revenue, including £385,800 in Council Tax revenue.
- New Homes Bonus – 220 new homes will result in a New Homes Bonus payment of £2.6m.

Story Homes have provided further information about the values of the company within their vision brochure demonstrating their investment into apprentices and graduates as a key area of their business.

# BENEFITS AND INFRASTRUCTURE



The Site will provide a range of new and expanded infrastructure to ensure that the new development is sustainable and self-sufficient, has access to day-to-day services and facilities, and is capable of integrating successfully with the existing local community.



## Community Benefits

Through local engagement with the Culcheth Community Primary School Story Homes are proposing to:

- Provide a new pedestrian crossing on Warrington Road. This will improve pedestrian access and also slow traffic on Warrington Road.
- Improve the pickup and drop-off process surrounding the nearby educational facilities and the bus lay-bys to improve traffic flows at peak periods. We would welcome a meeting with the Council highways and education departments to establish how these improvements can be brought forward
- In addition to a network of green infrastructure throughout the Site, Story Homes are also proposing to provide a network of public footpaths across the Site that utilise the recreational value of the new green spaces.
- Explore with the Council how we can look to discourage anti-social behaviour in the unlit play area/skate park after dark.

Story Homes can confirm that the Site is:

- Available for development. Story Homes has an agreement with all of the landowners with an interest in the Site, to bring it forward for residential development (subject to its release from the Green Belt). There are no legal or ownership constraints to its delivery;
- Achievable and viable for residential development. It is located in a strong market area which experiences high demand for new homes and there are no overriding constraints which present an obstacle to its delivery.

# 09 CONCLUSION



The emerging Local Plan recognises that Warrington must provide new homes both to meet the needs of its population and to underpin economic growth. Warrington Borough Council acknowledges that this cannot be achieved on brownfield land alone. Green Belt releases are essential.

This Vision Document sets out how the land at Warrington Road, Culcheth can provide a new, high quality residential development. It will provide attractive and well-built family homes as part of a sustainable natural and tranquil environment, integrated with new green and blue infrastructure. It will help Warrington to meet its growing and urgent housing needs.

The Site can be brought forward using a comprehensive masterplanning process, with significant involvement from both Warrington Borough Council and the existing local community.

This vision document provides the evidence to demonstrate that Warrington Road in Culcheth represents a logical and sustainable development opportunity where the exceptional circumstances to support its release from the Green Belt are clear. A number of technical assessments have been undertaken which confirm that there are no physical constraints or other potential impacts or environmental conditions which could preclude the development of the Site for housing. The proposed development clearly accords with the three dimensions of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.

# NEXT STEPS

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The Site is in the control of a well-known high quality housebuilder (Story Homes), and is considered suitable and deliverable within the first 5 years of the emerging Local Plan period.

Story Homes are committed to progressing the emerging Concept Masterplan towards a high quality residential development that responds to the local housing need, whilst taking into account and reflecting the character of the surrounding settlement, and ensuring the development of the Site would form a new defensible Green Belt boundary to the east of the village.

Story Homes looks forward to working with Warrington Borough Council to progress the proposals for the Site.

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Kensington House, Ackhurst Business Park, Chorley, PR7 1NY  
Tel: 01257 443250

[www.storyhomes.co.uk](http://www.storyhomes.co.uk)